The Saturday Review of Literature

VOL. XV NO. 8 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19, 1936 TEN CENTS A COPY

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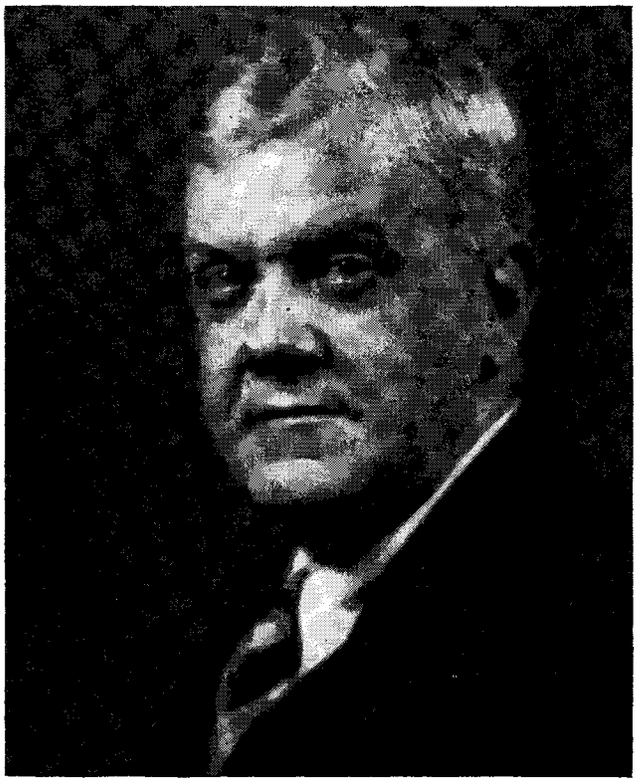
Amateur History*

BY ARTHUR M. SCHLESINGER



W. E. WOODWARD

ONE wonders why the author felt impelled to write this survey of American history. If the publishers are to be believed, the reason was to emancipate the public from the "old fashioned Model T history." If the author is to be taken at his word, he wanted to tell the people "the truth about our historical past and the inception and spread of American social movements." It is his further purpose "to present the rise and development of the American nation as a continuous social process." These aims deserve unstinted praise, and may be unreservedly commended to Legionnaires, Daughters, and all other patrons and practitioners of American history. Yet the one lasting impression that the volume makes is that, even as a popular narrative, it is in most respects of the vintage of twenty-five or thirty years ago: invertebrate in structure, diffuse and episodic in presentation, didactic in manner, primarily political in subject matter, and slovenly as to facts.

Taken purely as political history, Woodward's treatment is lopsided and ill-formed. In the realm of foreign relations the United States has developed two distinct policies of profound import: the Monroe Doctrine and the Open Door policy. Of the latter he vouchsafes not a word. As to the former, he gives a somewhat fantastic account of the international crisis lying back of Monroe's message, and fails completely to grasp the nationalistic reasons, which contemporary evidence discloses, for the American government's refusal to combine with Great Britain in warning off the Continental powers. Thereafter the Doctrine nearly vanishes from his pages; yet in its later glosses and permutations it has formed much of the meat of American diplomatic history down to the present time. The author, on the other hand, devotes loving attention to wars and battles. The military operations of the Revolutionary War occupy two and a half times as many pages as the causes that produced the event. The story of Arnold's treachery receives five times as much space as the peace negotiations.

The treatment of the movement for independence is confused and sketchy. No picture is given of the growth of revolutionary organization, of the interplay of the merchant and mechanic groups, of the far-flung activities of the committees of correspondence, of the skilful use of propaganda through symbols, anniversary celebrations, and newspaper misrepresentation. In his section on the causes of the American Revolution he ascribes the movement to the personal ambition of individuals, the general economic discontent of the people, and the stupidity of the ministry. Twenty pages later he observes, in passing, that Tom Paine was right in asserting the Americans were grown-up children who wanted a nation of their own. This, he concedes, "was at the bottom of the revolutionary movement." But if this is so (and most historians would agree with Paine), why should so fundamental a fact creep in merely as an afterthought?

The point seems a minor one, however, as the book proceeds. In discussing the events leading to the Civil War Woodward sheds darkness on many matters that the ordinary college textbook makes clear. The Compromise of 1850 did not repeal the Missouri Compromise, as he affirms, and the significance of the Utah and New Mexico acts was not that slavery could exist in those territories, but that its status was put up to eventual adjudication by the Supreme Court. Nor did the doctrine of popular sovereignty maintain that the people of a territory should decide between slavery and freedom when the time came to form a state constitution: they had always enjoyed that privilege. On the contrary, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which embodied Douglas's doctrine, made it possible for the territorial legislatures to decide the matter at any time. Moreover, it was this statute that repealed the Missouri Compromise.

The Dred Scott decision brings further confusions. Woodward misses the salient legal point of the court's findings by failing to state that Dred had lived for a time in old Louisiana Territory north of the Missouri Compromise line. What he means by remarking, "The decision was, in effect, the Kansas-Nebraska Act put in a juristic form," I do not know and can hardly guess. The only important personage at the time who harbored this delusion was Douglas; but there is no indication that the author knows this, for in discussing the Lincoln-Douglas debates he wholly overlooks the famous "Freeport Doctrine," in which Douglas expounded this interesting thesis, and gives his time to berating Lincoln for "nimble evasiveness." It may further be observed that, contrary to Woodward's assertions, Chief Justice Taney did not regard the anti-slavery provision of the Ordinance of

* *A NEW AMERICAN HISTORY. By W. E. Woodward. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1936. $4.*

Next Week

THE MAKING OF WEBSTER'S
By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

SHINING SCABBARD
By R. C. HUTCHINSON
Reviewed by Wilson Follett

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1787 as in any wise affected by the decision. According to this reasoning, the old Northwest Territory, being a part of the original national area and thus unlike Louisiana Territory, fell fairly under the constitutional provision that Congress might "make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory and other property belonging to the United States." It is equally contrary to ascertainable fact that Lincoln's election in 1860 "resulted from the split in the Democratic party." A cursory examination of the election returns will show that, had all the popular votes cast for Lincoln's three opponents been centered on any one of them, Lincoln would still have carried the electoral college.

In the author's opinion the "primary, deep-seated cause" of the Civil War "had its origin in a battle to the death between capitalism and agrarianism." This thesis, to be sure, is asserted rather than developed, but in view of its apparently challenging character he might at least have been expected to use his terms with some degree of exactitude. Agrarianism, says "Webster's New International Dictionary," is "the theory or practice of an equal or equitable division of landed property." Obviously the Southern aristocracy did not stand for any such share-the-wealth scheme. If he means not agrarianism but a plantation system of agriculture, there still remains a real difficulty about the term, capitalism. If the Southern slaveholders were not capitalists —owning land, natural resources, and the tools of production — what were they? But perhaps he means it was industrial capitalism that was doing battle with the Southern economic system. Again difficulties arise, for the great bulk of the Northerners were small farmers—agrarians in the sense that they wanted free homesteads from the government—and not industrialists at all. The Middle West cradled the new Republican party, and even in 1860 many of the financial magnates in the East were lukewarm or hostile to the Middle Western standard bearer of the party. And for many years the Western agriculturists formed the backbone of Republican strength.

After the Civil War, preoccupation with the melodrama of Reconstruction leads the author to omit whole sectors of American history. Not only does he fail to describe the economic and social rebuilding of the South itself, but he forgets to get the plains and mountain states populated, and to trace the vast material transformation of the nation that begot Big Business and produced the successive waves of rural unrest. Kansas, the Dakotas, Colorado, Nevada, and the rest are virtually nonexistent save for occasional mention in connection with election returns.

One's sense of insecurity in reading this "new" American history is deepened by the manhandling of quotations. A portion of an American classic is thus rendered:

"A house divided against itself cannot stand; this government divided into free and slave states cannot endure, they must all be free or all slave, they must all be one thing or the other."

The original reads:

"'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved,—I do not expect the house to fall; but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing, or all the other."

Or take a less familiar example from Lincoln, which Woodward uses to represent him as a staunch laborite:

"Labor is the superior of capital and deserves much higher consideration. I bid the laboring people beware of surrendering the power which they possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to shut off the door of advancement for such as they, and fix new disabilities and burdens upon them until all liberty shall be lost."

Aside from minor inaccuracies in the second sentence of the quotation, the author plays a trick on the reader by omitting without indication a substantial passage of fourteen sentences separating the two sentences above—a passage, moreover, which begins: "Capital has its rights, which are as worthy of protection as any other rights."

Such comments as the foregoing seem particularly relevant because Woodward, despite his professions, conceives of American history as past politics with an injection of just enough economics to annotate the doings of parties and government. The reader will look in vain for the promised treatment of the "rise and development of the American nation." People in nonpolitical walks of life do not exist except as digits in the decennial census returns. Religion ceases after the colonial period save for the antics of the Mormons. Imaginative literature is, I think, represented solely by "Uncle Tom's

(*Continued on page* 14)

Christmas Carol—1936

BY PHYLLIS McGINLEY

"The world now has 7,600,000 men under arms, excluding navies, as against 5,900,000 in 1913."—News item in the Sun.

OH! Little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Your flocks are folded in to sleep, and sleep your little ones.
Behold, there is a Star again that climbs the eastern sky.
And seven million living men are picking up their guns.

Hark, the happy cannons roar—
Glory to the Dictator,
Death and fear, and peace defiled,
And a world unreconciled!

Once more the bells of Christendom ring out a proclamation
Of joy to all the universe, and mercy, and good will;
While brother shoots his brother down, and nation scowls at nation,
And seven million uniforms are decorate at drill.

Hail to Dupont and to Krupp!
Steel is strong and going up.
Let the tidings glad be sent—
'Tis the Morn of Armament.

God rest you merry, gentlemen, whose will these armies are.
Go proudly in your colored shirts, let nothing you dismay.
(Oh, little town of Bethlehem, how fades your shining star?)
While seven million fighting men stand up on Christmas Day.

Sing hosanna, sing Noel.
Sing the gunner and the shell.
Sing the candle, sing the lamp,
Sing the Concentration Camp.
Sing the Season born anew,
Sing of exile for the Jew,
Wreathe the world with evergreen.
Praise the cunning submarine.
Sing the barbed and bitter wire,
Poison gas and liquid fire,
Bullet, bomb, and hand grenade,
And the heart of man, afraid.
Christ is come, the Light hath risen,
All our foes are safe in prison,
And the Christmastide begets
Seven million bayonets.

Hear the carol once again—
Peace on earth, good will to men.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Company, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription, $3.50 a year. Vol. XV, No. 8, December 19, 1936. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 1, 1879.

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Popularity and Noel Coward

TONIGHT AT EIGHT-THIRTY. A group of plays by Noel Coward. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $2.75.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

WE hear a good deal about, and from, the writer who is too sensitive, too idealistic, too finely loyal to his best, to be seduced into any such commercial trick of the short story trade as using plots. These people deny flatly that there is a recognizable mechanical structure on which every successful short story is built, no matter whether it happens to be by Katherine Mansfield, Anton Chekov, or some slave of the pulps. They despise the boy-meets-girl device, and insist on discovering for their uniquely ambitious purposes some hitherto unknown dilemma of the human mind. It does no good to tell them that there are no such dilemmas, and that it wouldn't matter if there were. They hold out for originality, for imagination. They are extravagantly scornful of the fiction published by the nationally circulated magazines. They cry for wit, for ingenuity, for "creative genius." Currently, they direct you, say, to Faulkner, Hemingway, Noel Coward.

Vandamm

GERTRUDE LAWRENCE AND NOEL COWARD IN "WE WERE DANCING."

The nine one-act plays by Noel Coward, collectively called "Tonight at 8:30," have had a wildly successful year in London, and are now launched on what promises to be an equal success in New York. They are nearly as much fun to read as they are to see. For all reading purposes they are short stories. The treatment is Mr. Coward's, which is comment enough. The plots belong to any hack writer, any day in the year.

If you will go out and buy at the nearest newsstand all the large women's magazines for December, plus the major five-cent weeklies, you will find all the stories of all the plays in "Tonight at 8:30" and most of them more than once. They fall into a few simple groups. Like this:—

Group 1. ("Fumed Oak." "Family Album.") This is the one about how the worm turns. In "Fumed Oak" the worm is the unhappy, henpecked father of a family who suddenly cannot bear his burdens any longer, says so, and departs. Any woman's magazine would buy the story just as it stands, because Mr. Coward has made the family utterly nasty people. It may be that the terms he uses in saying so would have to be censored a little. But that's all. In "Family Album" the worm is the middle-aged daughter of a lecherous old curmudgeon to whose care she has sacrificed all her youth and chance of happiness. Another popular magazine hit.

Group 2. ("We Were Dancing." "The Astonished Heart." "Still Life.") This is the one about how things look different in the morning. How you better not play with fire. How the reward of sin is heart break and homekeeping hearts, with no exception, are the happiest. No woman's magazine ever goes to press without a representative of this group.

Group 3. ("Red Peppers." "Ways and Means.") This is the one about how different people are if we really knew, and what a sight we should see if we could Lift the Curtain. "Ways and Means" puts us inside the Social Register. Directly in its bedroom, to be exact. We see that society people are often as miserably worried about money as we are ourselves, and not nearly as upright. "Red Peppers" is the peep behind the asbestos drop, the show must go on, the brave heart beneath the trouper's smiling mask. By the time the hoofers go in to their last dance the audience is as conversant with show life as a grip. Group 3 is the one Edna Ferber does so well.

Group 4. ("Hands Across the Sea.") About how things look different; but not emotionally, this time, just socially. The people the heroine found so charming in Malaya are as handy as armadillos in her London flat. This one is usually all in good fun. "Ruggles of Red Gap" was. "Alice Adams" was more somber.

Group 5. ("Shadow Play.")

This is the one about backward, turn backward, about ah, if we could only remember, from day to day. The hero and heroine, just on the point of divorce, find themselves whirled back in memory to the days of their courtship, their honeymoon. It brings them together again. It is bringing them together again in any number of costumes and settings every time the presses roll.

Those, I submit, are the bare bones of the plots of nine stories written by a man who has a perfectly deserved reputation for inventive genius. I hope this disrespectful outline of them conveys, as I mean it to, my great respect for Noel Coward. And also that I believe passionately that if you like good fiction you will find it, three stories out of ten at least, in the popular magazines. What I am trying to point out is that Mr. Coward, along with any other highly developed writer of fiction who has bothered to learn his business, knows that "creative genius," if any, shows itself in *using* the plot, not in *devising* it. Such writers have long since resigned themselves to the unalterable fact that a short story needs a plot, and that there aren't any new ones. What makes it new is telling it in a new way. Mr. Coward has superlative new ways. He is wicked, wistful, languid, biting, and fantastic when and as he likes. Perhaps such triumphs come from being willing to plant the known edible fruits instead of insisting on being Luther Burbank.

On Going to a Play

THE ART OF PLAYGOING. By John Mason Brown. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANK NORRIS

JOHN MASON BROWN of the *Post* is probably New York's most distinguished theatre critic. His standards are high, his judgments are consistent and on those rare occasions—the most uncomfortable in a reviewer's life—when he is compelled to drop all reservations and pay whole-hearted tribute to a great show, John Mason Brown manages to do so with a minimum of gush, a maximum of plausibility and dignity. Few people have ever lost money going to a play Mr. Brown recommended, and no one ever missed a good time staying away from one on which he put a critical finger. Almost annually *Variety* announces that during the year his predictions on theatrical hits and misses have been more accurate than those of any of his newspaper colleagues.

In spite of the somewhat austere atmosphere which pervades Mr. Brown's tempered daily comments, constant reading occasionally rewards his followers with a pretty flash of wit. One night several years ago Mr. Brown attended a blood-curdling spook show—during which phosphorescent spirits flew about the darkened stage like swallows in a barn—and emerged to report next afternoon that he had not been at all frightened by the "itinerant bedding."

In a somewhat more solemn vein, Mr. Brown has now brought out a little book called "The Art of Playgoing," a series of essays founded on a series of talks he delivered last winter at Town Hall. One can unequivocally recommend Brown

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the Critic. Brown the Lecturer is something a little different. To begin with, it is not easy to understand the purpose of these animadversions. The volume begins with a rather extensive discussion of "Playgoers Good and Bad." Since the theatre is and always has been a metropolitan institution, and since it offers a range of entertainment as wide as the artistic distance between Minsky and Meierhold, one would suppose that there could scarcely be such a thing as a good or bad playgoer; in the United States a good playgoer is a New Yorker who has bought a seat to a production appropriate to him, a bad one is one who has not.

There follows in the Brown book a progression of discourses on the inevitable limitations of library playgoing, the unreality of even the most realistic theatre, the need for subtle plotting, the special literary requirements for writing stage dialogue as opposed to novel dialogue. From time to time Mr. Brown brightens his texts with modest but welcome rays of original thought. Elsewhere, however, there is a most mournful burden of borrowings, references, and attributions. Mr. Brown's hours on lecture platforms have evidently encouraged him to adopt one of pedagogy's most tiresome practices. In "The Art of Playgoing" he quotes or alludes to no less than fifty greater and lesser authorities at least once, including Shakespeare, Maurois, and Mrs. Lindbergh. To establish the assertion that "writing for the theatre is set apart from other writing," he draws upon Aristotle, Goethe, and Elmer Rice.

The volume contains a number of safe and sane definitions. What it has to say seems sound enough. But the point is, for whom is the book intended? Any serious theatregoer surely need not read a series of well documented platitudes to help him enjoy the theatre. More likely, the book will find a place for itself as a solid little packet of theatrical commonsense for students and the young.

A Wistful Hero

NO HERO—THIS. By Warwick Deeping. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1936. $2.50.

MR. WARWICK DEEPING has inured his public to wistful heroes who are the soul of honor and who, in consequence of leading with their chins, very often get it in the neck. Stephen Brent is no exception. Reluctantly enlisting, he reluctantly served the British Army as medical officer throughout the world war, first in the Near East, later in France. He was often frightened, he was often brave, he often missed his wife Mary very much, he occasionally had impulses to be unfaithful to Mary but always overcame them. He went on leave, then back to the line; then he went on leave again and then he went back to the line. Though such monotony has to be accepted in life, it is hard to accept it in a novel.

The Danish Solution

DENMARK — THE COÖPERATIVE WAY. By Frederic C. Howe. New York: Coward-McCann. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by AGNES ROTHERY

AMERICANS—eager to know, but rather reluctant to study, all schemes of betterment—subject themselves readily to being "made conscious." We have been made "speed conscious" and "roofing material conscious" and "B. O. conscious," and if we are not now made "coöperative conscious" it is no fault of Frederic C. Howe's last book. Not that one can swallow "Denmark—The Coöperative Way" in one gulp and hope it will somehow do the business. This contribution to the literature of cooperation by the Special Advisor, Office of the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, one time Commissioner of Immigration in New York City, does not claim to be a panacea. While addressed to the general reader, it is complete with facts and figures for the serious student.

All the Scandinavian countries, with their small, homogeneous, and well educated populations, understand and apply the principle of coöperation not only in buying and selling, in manufacturing and processing, but in distribution and transportation, housing and banking. However, none of the others has carried agricultural coöperation to such lengths and into such detail as Denmark, and Mr. Howe's book is most valuable when concerned with this phase of the movement.

In Denmark "in the middle of the last century, forty-two per cent of the farmers were tenants, while fifty-eight per cent were free-hold owners. Today farm tenancy is in effect at an end." A system of adult education has so enlightened a peasantry formerly timid and ignorant, that today they are admirable farmers, alert salesmen, and a political power which knows how to make its vote felt.

The Danish farmer produces dairy goods of superlative and uniform quality. He gets his pigs slaughtered at a local coöperative slaughtery, his butter made at a local coöperative dairy, and his eggs handled by a coöperative egg expert, so that he, and not the middle man or the speculative agent, gets the profits. (In 1933 in the United States of the consumer's dollar the processor received sixty-nine cents and the farmer thirty-one.)

It is not only in setting forth many such explicit facts but in drawing a parallel between them and the present condition of agriculture and the farmer in this country and Denmark that Mr. Howe's book differs from its predecessors.

A constitutional monarchy — which is in reality a social democracy — where there is no destitution and no illiteracy, where the population of 3,600,000 are all of similar racial tradition cannot serve as a model for our huge and amorphous republic. But simply because we are of vast dimensions is no reason why cattle should be "shipped half way across the country to be killed and then shipped back again to the place of their origin to be consumed." "The fact that there are eighty-five slaughter houses in a country .... but twice the size of Massachusetts and one-twentieth the size of Texas is indicative of the fact that slaughtering is an industry easy of decentralization."

After dealing with agricultural questions Mr. Howe comes to political problems.

> There is [he observes] the same reason for the farmer to enter politics in America as there was in Denmark. There is the same necessity for home ownership; for the ending of farm tenancy; for cheap and sympathetic credit.

Democracy in Denmark is economic rather than political, and coöperation, according to Mr. Howe, is Denmark's answer to fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, communistic Russia, and capitalistic America.

Agnes Rothery's book on Denmark will be published in April by the Viking Press.

Jonals Co., Copenhagen

KALUNDBORG, A HARBOR TOWN AT SEALAND.
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Familiar Things Made New

THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMANTIC IDEAL. By F. L. Lucas. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

IN spite of the fact that Mr. Lucas's book is a collection of critical essays, it is delightful reading. The work is full of fact and opinion clearly and imaginatively presented. And one hardly knows what to praise more highly, whether lucidity of thought or aptness of illustration. Since the present reviewer sixteen years ago took up the grisly task of "noticing" books he has seldom had a pleasanter opportunity. He and many others must be enchanted by a professor who is also a poet, by a bookworm who before your very eyes is transformed into a luna moth. Everything about the man and his book engages and attracts. There is hardly a page where he fails to remember Samuel Johnson's aphorism, which he quotes with appropriate approval, about making "new things familiar or familiar things new." Strangely mingling grace and fire he has vitalized shopworn and desiccated terms and connected them with ideas that are vivid and alive.

In six chapters and an epilogue ironically addressed to "reviewers and others who may find the book too long" (this reviewer did not find it so) Mr. Lucas has defined Romanticism, written its history, and foretold its future. He has further examined Coleridge as a critic, and in his remarkable fifth chapter he has dealt with the weakness of an unromantic time. A sixth section on Romanticism in the Real World is more prolix and less impressive than the others. But I am willing to forgive him that in consideration of his other benefits towards me.

The whole thought of Mr. Lucas's book springs from his definition of Romanticism. Without adopting blindly either the hypotheses or the slang of European psychologists, he has looked them over with a wary eye and held fast to that which is good. And he has found something which looks real to me and not a bit like those tissues of rhetoric "that confuse the thought or conceal the lack of it" in so many of his predecessors. One finds it refreshing to read in connection with a subject hitherto so foggy: "It is not so much its logical definition as its psychological basis that really matters." This does not mean that he has gone off the deep end into what no one understands very well, or that he is wandering in the labyrinth where the thread of Ariadne breaks just as one hears the first bellow of the Minotaur. But it does mean that he has recognized the existence and the importance of uncharted regions of the mind. For Mr. Lucas Romanticism becomes "the liberation" of the subliminal and the instinctive as opposed to two other parts of our natures, one of which is concerned with what is fact, while the other is concerned with what is fitting. Let us call them Realism and Classicism. Mr. Lucas sees in all men and all times a sort of triple conflict between the sense of dream, the sense of fact, and the sense of what is socially desirable, a conflict bound to end in temporary disaster, when, as today, any one of the three momentarily triumphs. If this idea is not wholly new, at any rate he has stated it convincingly and it leads to diverting deductions, as for instance that Mr. T. S. Eliot, protest he never so loudly, is a Romanticist naked and unashamed. When did the man who with more than mercurial thievishness wrote

Defunctive music undersea

cease to depend on the liberation of the subliminal and instinctive?

I may have wronged Mr. Lucas who very likely might not allow the illustration. Passing from the definition to history and prophecy, he continues to be remarkably entertaining and delightfully informing all over a subject when most writers only succeed in distilling the essence of ennui. He shows us Romance in Greece and Classicism in England. He shows us resurgence and breakdown, decadence and germination. And never once is he deceived by the vices of Coleridge and the virtues of Baudelaire. And in dozens of places he has made this reviewer feel as if scales had fallen from his eyes.

F. L. LUCAS

Nor for one can I be angry at his capacity to mock where mockery is asked for. Mr. Ezra Pound is beyond doubt a poet who ought to be, and I think will be, remembered. No one but a fool would deny his lyrical power, even if the notes are few. But Mr. Pound "sporting a little Greek," Mr. Pound seven months gone with parthenogenetic didacticism, Mr. Pound as the dogmatic instructor of feeble-minded youth, Mr. Pound as the pedantic managing director of the mortuary of esthetics, is precisely the intellectual tatterdemalion he appears when Mr. Lucas has got through with him. Not for nothing has Mr. Lucas written: "How many modern poets have sunk to become critics and never risen again!"

And that goes for a greater than Mr. Pound. Coleridge as a poet needs no more defense than a fixed star. But in other connections he seems to have possessed but one qualification, a vocabulary which he enjoyed using. For my sins I have read too much tosh on the distinction between fancy and imagination not to enjoy Mr. Lucas's dialectic destruction of the Palace of Romantic Criticism. On strict grounds it may not have been worth doing. But it may help to prevent the repetition of the kind of lectures which I once unfortunately had to take and later, more unfortunately still, to give.

Not the least of Mr. Lucas's virtues is the courage with which he has reaffirmed the old truth that behind every great work there must be something more than personality, however necessary personality may be. The thing that Aristotle called ethos has got to be there. It need not be a religion, or a moral code, or even that odd thing, a philosophy, but there must be something greatly extra-personal, a high general sentiment, a healthy species of cosmic consistency. All the grief and emptiness of our unconscionably clever artists and poets can be traced to their lack of an ethos. Homer never thought at all of the ethos which he had, but it thunders in his every hexameter. Your contemporary, on the contrary, never thinks of anything except the ethos he hasn't got, in whose place he has substituted Economic Determinism, Anglo-Catholicism, Surrealism, or what have you. And dear God! what grating and whining! Yet it is impossible to attribute our troubles to lost faith, for men have found it only rarely, or to changing standards, for standards have always had a way of changing, or to war, for men have always been acquainted with strife, or to capitalism and communism, for Cæsar and Spartacus knew them for commonplaces two millenniums ago. But if the ethos has been lost, if, as the Greek said long since, there is no "reconciliation between me and not-me," then we must expect weakness and despair and tall talk about trivial techniques until the ethos is found again.

I hope I have given the reader some idea of the charm and energy of Mr. Lucas's book. Any one disposed to discount my enthusiasm is at liberty to do so. Nevertheless I am glad that a clear voice has been lifted against well established nonsense. That it should be a Cambridge Don who has let the strong air and bright sun of intelligence into the musty attic is strangely satisfactory. Not all of them do that kind of thing. But were Mr. Lucas ten thousand times a don, it is glorious to come on a man who knows and loves literature as it should be known and loved, in whose ears Homer chants and Dante intones, whose wit is just and apt, whose learning is never tiresome, who sends you rushing to the library to read and to reread the great works of time.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Reading for Pleasure

HOW many thousand books will be given as Christmas presents no one may guess, but it is likely that thousands less than the sum will bring pleasure to the recipients. Uncle Henry, who is known to be something of a mountain climber, received three copies of "Autumn in the Valley," but did not get the Appalachian Club handbook for which he really yearned. His disappointment was passive, however, whereas cousin Helen who had hinted that she would like "Heads and Tales" may be forgiven some active irritation on discovering that the only book in her stocking was "The Book of Living Reptiles," which was on the nearest table when Bob was trying to make the 5:55. As for the two hundred thousand copies of "Gone with the Wind" that will be tied up in red ribbon this week because after all you can't go wrong with that and because book clerks everywhere are recommending it for shut-ins, college boys, and old ladies in North Dakota—conceivably a few of them will go to persons who would rather have had Plato or "The Parlor Hoyle."

Books are frequently bought at Christmas time to feed the news sense or satisfy the need of being fashionable. People in the know are reading this one, a literary young man has said that your soul is coarse indeed unless it is aware of that one, and liberal editors have named a third as your inescapable obligation toward Tomorrow. So you join the select company, you strain your soul through the finest bolting cloth, and you meet your obligation to the future at whatever cost in boredom—and what have you got?

One thing you conspicuously have not got, from the season's fashions, is pleasure in reading. The model 1936 literary person would rather be found dead or caught attending a Browning Club than entertain you. Don't be a softie, fiction has other and more serious business, which usually turns out to be competitive with Consumers' Research. If "Vingt Ans Après" were to appear for the first time this week, Clifton Fadiman would have to denounce it as Tory propaganda and unmask your satisfaction in it as unconscious fascism. You will take statistics, exegesis, and the horrors from fiction and like it, or be damned to you. For some time poetry was yoked with fiction in the same crusades; then it got cultured and much worse. It is now established that poetry written to be enjoyed by anyone belongs, with the crinoline and the women's rights movement, to the days of our innocence. In the new age it is written to be read solely by mathematicians, enjoyed by no one, and understood only by Horace Gregory.

But this is a big country and some of its inhabitants remain unregenerate. They refuse to be saved, fiction exhorts them in vain, and to the cultured disdain of poetry they return the vulgarity of a liking for John Keats, whom even a child can understand. Blind mouths, they will not abandon their comfort for the light to come and they insist on reading for the sole purpose of enjoying themselves. Islands in an ocean of righteousness, may they confute the uplift at Christmas time, gather the family round them by an open fire, and for an evening or two sin grievously by reading books that can do nothing for them except give them pleasure. In today's terms they are anti-literary. They are infidels, and in the orthodox establishment it is only by a kind of treason that a book is written in the deliberate purpose of making you like it.

By treason or chance, here and there, an occasional mutation in a regimented uplift, this season has produced some books that the unprofessional reader may enjoy, as all seasons must in spite of a professionally planned economy. But mostly the amateur, the reader of books, will pursue his search among old books, written during the world's lost wickedness. This editorial is written to cheer him on. There will be at Christmas time a day or two of release from pressure, an evening or two of ease before the fire, some hours of wellbeing. It is here suggested that you dedicate them not to the ephemeræ that were piled at the bottom of the Christmas tree, but to books that were close to your heart any time in the years behind you. For a few hours read books merely as books, as carriers of delight, as a known experience of enthusiasm or wonder or laughter or even tears.

How long since you read "The Odyssey"? Revisit it for an hour, hear Nausicaa speaking again, see the swineherd's tears and watch the dog Argos dying when the wanderer comes home. Or remind yourself of Lesbia and Chloe, of Roland's song, of the Siege Perilous, of Virgil's ghost which seemed hoarse from long silence. "Aucassin and Nicolette" makes first-rate family reading, Squire Western's oaths are good to hear, perhaps you have forgotten that Beatrix Esmond has her old age in another book. The radio will clank a thousand chains for Scrooge, but how about "The Birds' Christmas Carol," which delighted you when you were six? Or return to that finest of Christmas stories, "The Three Low Masses," with the notary plodding churchward in the frosty night and the sin of gluttony committed on the altar steps. The season suggests "Snowbound," which is a better poem than you perhaps remember, and do not fail to read the winter chapters of "Walden." Do not fail to read all of "Walden," in fact; finishing it, you may have an hour left for Thoreau's journals.

Those journals suggest other books which, like them, are too little known and will make excellent company around the fire. *The Saturday Review* reminded you two weeks ago that the journals of Lewis and Clark are among the great books of our literature, and the lover of Americana could suggest many more. If journals fit your mood, try John Woolman's, or Samuel Sewall's, or Louisa Alcott's, or Hawthorne's, or a volume of John Quincy Adams's. Do you want letters? Then Mark Twain's are the best in our literature, and they are little known. An autobiography? Well, try P. T. Barnum's, or Charles Godfrey Leland's, or Timothy Flint's, or Fanny Kemble's, or Beast Butler's. Travel? Well, the shouting has died now and we can enjoy "Typee" for its own sake again, or "Two Years Before the Mast," or "The Adventures of Captain Bonneville." Or perhaps your desire holds for one of those books that cannot be placed, the books entirely of their own kind, without precedent or sequel or explanation. Then try a strange, subtle, very moving book, a book that lights up a whole era and a whole idea, Francis Grierson's "The Valley of Shadows."

Try any book that has pleased or heartened you, that has made you know what time is or given you a sense of timelessness. This is the time to read "North of Boston" again, or "The Travels of Marco Polo," "Table Talk," "The Natural History of Selborne," "Love in Old Cloaths," "The Mauve Decade," "The Everlasting Mercy," "Coriolanus," "The Ballad of the White Horse," "The Food of the Gods," "Uncle Lisha's Shop," "London Lyrics"—yes, even "The Scalp Hunters" or "The Boy Duck Hunters" that delighted you thirty years ago, even "The Rubaiyat."

It is a season to remember that reading is fun, that books may minister to us in ways neither of the peace treaties nor of the social equilibrium. Besides the poet who died young in all of us, or rather as Stevenson said lives on famished and inarticulate, there precariously exists in us the lover of literature, whom these days it is the purpose of organized pressure groups to obliterate. Nourish and fortify him for the publishing season to come by giving him a few hours before the fire with books whose delight he experienced when he and the world were younger.

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Letters to the Editor: *The History of Ireland*

"Dear Dark Head"

SIR:—In his review of "Dear Dark Head" in the November 7th issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, P. C. makes so many errors of fact that one can only assume that the review was based on a hasty and incomplete reading of the book, and on an inaccurate memory of Ireland's literary history.

P. C. is quite wrong in saying that "Dear Dark Head" has no warrant in ancient tradition. The notes at the end of Douglas Hyde's "Love Songs of Connaught" show the exact location in The Royal Irish Academy of old Gaelic manuscripts of Cean Dubh Dilis, and Doctor Hyde dates the one he translates as seventeenth century. Pre-Carolan is the term he uses. Also the title of my book, P. C. to the contrary, was chosen for other than sentimental reasons, as any reader of the book will learn by turning to page 258. The allegorical figure which the name represents is still powerful in Ireland today.

"Miss Landreth," says your reviewer, "is rather misleading when she names the Scandinavians in Ireland as Danes. They were Norse; they were settlers as well as raiders, as the place names," etc. Prior to page 111 of "Dear Dark Head" I speak of those invaders as Vikings or Norsemen. On page 111 these sentences explain the use of the word Danes (the one most ordinarily used in Ireland): "After this, even more foreigners came to Ireland. Fingal—Fair Foreigners—the Irish had called the first invaders, who probably came from the Scandinavian peninsula. Dubhgal—Dark Foreigners—they called these even fiercer newcomers. Vikings—Men of the Bays—the Irish called them both, and later generations, mistakenly and indiscriminately called them Danes." That they were settlers as well as raiders is fully explained on page 127.

Much more serious than these unjustified implications of shortcomings is P. C.'s statement that the book is history as it became reflected in the minds of legend makers. Calendars of State Papers, Calendars of Inquisitions Post Mortem, The Annals of the Four Masters, of Clanmacnoise, Ulster and Loch Ce, Chronicum Scotorum, Chronicles of Florence of Worcester, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, Annals of Rober de Hoveden, Annals Cambrae, Holinshed's Chronicles, William of Malmsbury's Memorial of St. Dunstan, Giraldus Cambrensis, these are only a few of the legitimate source materials on which the book is based. It is true that the legends of early times appear in the opening chapters of the book, but their use is explained in the Foreword, and no attempt is made to deceive the reader as to their fictional character. The poems which are quoted in later chapters of the book were introduced to show the social life of the time, or because of the influence they exerted in shaping events in Ireland.

I make it plain in the Foreword of the book that I do not profess to have written a critical history of Ireland. But I must insist that the picture I present of that country is far from being the mawkish and prettified one which P. C.'s review suggests.

HELEN LANDRETH.

New York City.

"THE BUTLER TURNS OUT TO BE A G-MAN—THE PROFESSOR WAS REALLY AN OPIUM SMUGGLER—AND THE ONE WHO KILLED HIM WAS HIS ADOPTED SON. NOW WILL YOU COME TO BED!"

Mr. Colum Replies

SIR:—Miss Landreth's book is a very serviceable one and I said this, I hope distinctly, in my review of it. It reveals the tradition of a people whose memories go back to the early iron age and whose sagas written down in the seventh century and going back to a still older epoch bring the country people of today vividly before us. And in revealing that tradition it gives a frame which the public needs for a great deal of contemporary Irish poetry, drama, and romance. Neither the legend of Ireland nor the history of Ireland is known to any considerable public and Miss Landreth in giving them an Irish twilight has done something helpful. But it must be understood that this is not the clear light of day; "Dear Dark Head" is neither critical nor exact; in short, it is not history, it is legend which may lead many people to read a proper history of Ireland—say the one by Professor Curtis which has just been published.

Miss Landreth informs us that she has read Calendars of State Papers, Calendars of Inquisitions, and so on. I do not doubt it. But to comprehend what these documents mean requires a long training, and Miss Landreth's pages do not read as if they are by one who has taken such a training. "P. C. is quite wrong in saying that 'Dear Dark Head' has no warrant in ancient tradition." She goes on to say that Douglas Hyde dates the term as belonging to the seventeenth century. To be sure he does: it is a term in a love song, addressed to an actual woman. But it was not addressed to the country until our own day when William Rooney took Cean Dubh Dilis as an equivilent to Kathleenni-Holohan or Dark Rosaleen. It has no ancient warrant. And to my mind it is a very sentimental term.

And Miss Landreth does gives the impression that the Scandinavians in Ireland were Danes. After all, the most memorable episode in which the Scandinavians figure is the Battle of Clontarf. And how does Miss Landreth begin her description of that battle? "All the Danes and their allies had strong, polished armor encasing their bodies from head to foot." A reading of the Saga of Burnt Njal would have made it impossible for Miss Landreth to write of the Scandinavians engaged in that battle as Danes: they were Norse settled in Iceland and in the Hebrides.

PADRAIC COLUM.

New York City.

Yeshiva College

SIR:—In his comments on "Who's Who In America," H. L. Mencken says: "and Yeshiva, whatever that may be."

Yeshiva College is the only college of liberal arts and science under Jewish auspices in the United States; it is located on the highest ground of Manhattan Island; and should Mr. Mencken venture that far north of Baltimore, we shall be happy to have him visit us and discover what Yeshiva may be.

JOSEPH T. SHIPLEY,
Secretary of the Faculty.

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The Story of Jack and Jill

(As it might be told by William Faulkner, P. G. Wodehouse, and Alexander Woollcott)

By TIMOTHY FULLER

William Faulkner:

THE rotting fields of tomatoes sent up a choking stench that filled the lungs with their decay; one could taste the putrid slime of the crawling things that ate their way through the spoiled crops. Spoiled by the month of rain. Now the rain had stopped, but in its place was fog, fog thick, mealy, and soaking, it rotted your very bones and settled over you like the sweat on a still-born child. People moved about listlessly, ghostly, not caring. Past the pile of squirming, steaming cow-dung came Black Jack, out of jail, drunk, black, ugly. Swaggering, loose-jointed strides carried him by the row of squat houses, where mothers drew their dirty, diseased children back from the door, cringing as he passed. He looked to neither side of his way, his blood-veined eyes rolled in their yellow-circled sockets, dull, unseeing. People knew but didn't speak it; he was going to Widow Jill's on the hill.

The fog was thicker on the hill, it clutched at the throat, strangling, a slow tubercular drowning. Long streamers of it like a feathery tropic sea-weed oozed through the broken panes of the Widow's hut, turning the straw matting where she lay into a wet mass like hay in a flooded field. Her hair stuck to her face in gray strings, cobwebs on unbaked bread, and her body in its sack-cotton dress was lumped and soft like jelly in a rubber bag. A fever was about the place, on the floor that moved and screeched with life, in the corner where a slaughtered pig was stretched beneath a tattered rug, and in the kitchen where featherless hens scratched, coughed, lay still from hunger. The negro lurched through the fog-framed door, paused a moment looking in the dark, then hurled forward and raised the jug of rotten corn whiskey to his lips, drank, choked, and drank again, the yellow fluid streaming from his puffed red lips, streaking his shirt. The old woman stirred.

WILLIAM FAULKNER
Drawing by D. Parrott.

. . . . . .

In the morning, a child playing in the grass at the edge of the field found them and ran screaming to his home. The men came, parted the tall grass at the edge of the field, saw them. Great black hands tight about a puffy white throat, angular white fingers buried deep in a wet black throat, bodies bruised rolling down the hill, the broken jug near them. They buried them that way, they couldn't part them.

P. G. Wodehouse:

I was on the point of toddling off to the Drones for a spot of gin and b. when Jeeves plucked the sleeve and announced the following, viz.:

"Mr. Jack is here to see you, sir."

To say that I was staggered would be to exaggerate. We Woosters are a hardy lot. Shaken, yes. Staggered, never. Nevertheless, this came in the nature of a bombshell, following as it did the preceding events. A month before on Boat Night I had, in the spirit of good fun, bet young Tubby Jack he couldn't retrieve the bobby's headgear which I had just tossed in the Thames. It was while he was fishing out said object by means of a long pole, that the gendarmes fell on him in droves, carrying him off to the dungeons, while I, with my customary good sense, faded into the night. The upshot of our exchange of words the following day established two points: (1) I did not collect the wager, and (2) young Tubby never wanted to see me again. Now, dash it, here he was camping on my doorstep waiting to be ushered into the presence. No wonder the Wooster frame was shaken.

"What does the blighter want, Jeeves?" I asked.

"Mr. Jack did not divulge the content of his mission, sir," replied Jeeves.

"Oh. Well show the fellow in, Jeeves, old man, show him in."

"Very good, sir," replied Jeeves, melting into the hall.

A moment later Tubby appeared followed by Jeeves who hovered near the door.

"Well, well, well, how are you, Bertie? Haven't seen you for a dog's age," he gushed, wringing my hand. Again the Wooster body underwent a thorough shaking, after all, I mean the last time we'd met although there had been no blows, an impartial observer would scarcely have classed us as schoolboy chums tied by bonds that go deeper than blood.

"Yes, quite, quite," I managed, sinking into a chair.

"Oh by the way, Bertie," he said reaching in his pocket, "I believe I never paid you that two quid you won Boat Night. Jolly lark that!"

This was too much. "Jeeves," I said weakly, "drink, strong drink."

"While Jeeves was preparing the s. and soda, Tubby launched into speech.

"You see, Bertie, there's this girl, met her at Cannes, a peach, wavy brown hair, eyes like jewels, a nose that turns up just a trifle, a picture, only the trouble is I. . . ."

I held up the hand. I could see the man was unbalanced.

"A moment, Tubby, give me facts, cold facts. Her name?"

P. G. WODEHOUSE
Drawing by Galdone.

"Jill," he said like a priest commencing a prayer.

"Jill?" I replied. "Not a pretty name, I doubt if the poet Keats...."

"It's a beautiful name, don't say anything against that name or I'll. . . ."

"Everyone to his tastes," I countered, and then seeing he was becoming unstrung. "Tell me all, spare no details."

"Well, you see this girl Jill has so many friends and is always doing so many things, bridge, social work, you know, anyway I never can get her alone and I thought if Jeeves. . . ."

"Say no more, you have come to the right man. I will handle your case personally."

"Well, I'd thought Jeeves. . . ."

"Jeeves," I said evenly, "has lost his touch. I am the man you are looking for. You say you never have time to see the girl alone, social functions and their like cluttering up her time? Too true, I noticed just the other day and commented on it at the Drones that the modern girl is degenerating into a human ant. As the poet Wordsworth said 'The world, the world . . . the world . . .' oh, dash it, how does that go, Jeeves? That thing about the world?" I asked the man as he appeared with the wherewithal.

"The poet Wordsworth, sir, said 'The world is too much with us, late and soon, Getting and spending, we lay waste our. . . ."

"That's it! You see, Tubby, the world is too much with the modern girl."

"Yes, but I fail to see . . ."

"I have the solution to your problem. Be calm, relax, the master is at work. This is simplicity itself: always, Tubby, always when confronted with a problem of this kind strive for simplicity, that is the tool with which the craftsman works molding his medium into its required shape." I paused to let these words sink in. "Corner the girl, Tubby, get her in a car and drive to the country. Find a hill and climb. That is all, find a hill and

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climb. I have learned from years of experience that hill climbing relieves all tensions. Away will flow all her thoughts of other things leaving you in their stead. I don't say that this will be an improvement, but you will have her to yourself and then it's up to you to apply the pressure."

Jeeves coughed. "May I venture to suggest, sir, that possibly. . . ."

I shushed the man. "You may go, Jeeves, I am handling Mr. Jack's affair."

"Very well, sir," he said slinking away.

"Now, Tubby," I said, rising and indicating the door, "I'm afraid I must call this interview to a halt. You have all the data firmly in the bean for future reference?"

"Yes, I don't think much of it but I'll try it."

And with these somewhat ungrateful words he departed.

It was a week later that I entered my rooms and found Jeeves desirous of speech.

"Mr. Jack called, sir," said Jeeves removing coat, hat, and gloves.

"Indeed? And what did he have to say for himself? I suppose he tried my scheme and found it satisfactory?"

"He did inform me, sir, that he had followed the course of action which you had suggested at your last meeting."

"Everything fine, wedding bells soon to toll, I suppose?"

"Mr. Jack did me the honor of recounting the events which took place, sir. He invited the young lady to ride with him in the country and finding a suitable elevation in the vicinity of Surrey, suggested a climb. The young lady replied that she would, if I may employ the term, sir, adore to. Mr. Jack informs me that everything was progressing smoothly and that he was on the very point of asking the young lady's hand in marriage when the turf gave way beneath his feet and, in an effort to recover his equilibrium, caught hold of the young lady and both of them had the misfortune to roll down the hill. A matter of some two hundred feet, Mr. Jack informs me."

"Good Lord! Then I suppose everything is off!"

"On the contrary, sir, Mr. Jack and the young lady are being married tomorrow."

"But how could she marry the clumsy ass after he had pulled her over a cliff while popping the word to her?"

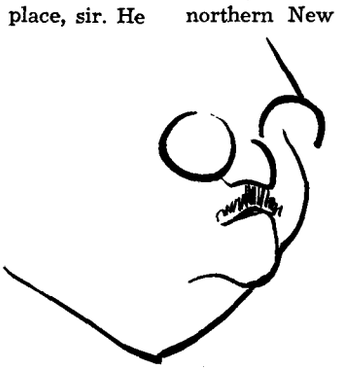
"I am afraid that I overstepped my bounds, sir, but foreseeing such a contingency, I took the liberty of suggesting to Mr. Jack, as he was departing from your interview, that he take a pail with him to employ as an excuse to lure the young lady to the summit of the hill in order to fill it with water. I omitted to mention, sir, that Mr. Jack was carrying the filled pail at the time of his unfortunate accident and became quite dampened when its contents engulfed him. As I foresaw, sir, the young lady was so amused by the picture Mr. Jack made in his moistened and dishevelled condition that she saw him in a light unlike any in which she had ever seen him before and was promptly attracted to him so much that she accepted his proposal of marriage."

I marveled at the man.

Alexander Woollcott:

THERE has come to me recently, through various and sundry channels, a little gem of a story which, if your slightly hoarse Town Crier is not amiss, should warm the cockles of even the most petrified hearts, a story albeit that simply screams to be retold over and over again, by cozy firesides, in hidebound club rooms, everywhere from transcontinental airplanes to Sunday School picnics. When I, in a recent word-duel with that rapier-penned mistress of letters, Miss Dorothy Parker, brought forth this tale, that dear lady was reduced to a state of, if not active lachrymation, at least to a point where that case-hardened heart paused in its daily level rhythm and did what can be lightly termed a couple of flip-flops.

There dwelt, upon a time, in a village which, if memory serves, was located in northern New York State midway between those illustrious towns, Utica and Albany, a lad and a maid who, for lack of a better term, were much taken with one another. The lad's name, and I doubt if Dickens would, were he living, immortalize that name in his work, was, Heaven help us, Jack. The maid, possibly sired by an alcoholic parent, was burdened with the unpoetic title of Jill. For reason perhaps unnecessary to the story but which was, in a word, to fetch a pail of water, these two children of Cupid did, and it may be safe to say that in this age and day it would not have occurred, climb a hill, a hill, I am led to believe, which would have done justice to that to me incomprehensible race of hardies called Mountain Toppers. The ruminant citizens of that somnolent village were startled from their accustomed state of siesta to see the never to be forgotten sight of Jack and, perforce, Jill alight at the bottom of the hill in, what can lucidly be described, as a heap. The nub, the nugget, or, possibly, the key point of this tale, that which lifts it from the ordinary realm of fantasy, lies in the incredible yet unshakable fact that the pail came tumbling after.



ALEXANDER WOOLLCOTT
Caricature by Auerbach Levy

Just Before the War

PRE-WAR YEARS, 1913-17. *By Frederic L. Paxson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.* 1936. $3.75.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

DR. PAXSON'S book is timely. Previous treatments of American history just preceding our entry into the World War have without exception lamentably oversimplified a complex and difficult network of events and forces. It is easy to show wisdom after the event; to ridicule with icy disillusionment steps taken in the heat of national emotion; to forget Lord Morley's great truth that politics must be an eternal choice of second-best courses. We have had cocksure writers saying farewell to reform as if reform were not always largely futile, and discussing the road to war as if both it and the alternative road had been broad, easy, and brightly-lighted. Mr. Paxson is not cocksure but careful; he is more anxious to be balanced than to be brilliant. In this unassuming, unexciting narrative he has tried to reproduce the tremendous difficulties faced by responsible American leaders from 1913 to 1917; to weigh the forces of public opinion at their just value; and to treat with moderation decisions which were bound, like all great national decisions, to have mixed results of good and evil. Mr. Paxson has not written a striking or highly entertaining book. But it is scholarly, thoughtful, and fair; it is the shrewdest and most comprehensive summary of these crucial four years yet published.

The book, well planned though undramatic, falls into two parts. One deals in warmly sympathetic fashion with Wilson's task of internal reform and readjustment. Dr. Paxson, obviously himself a liberal and a little impatient of Theodore Roosevelt's beginnings, tells how a great program was successfully carried through. He deals expertly with the Underwood Tariff, income tax, Clayton Act, and labor legislation; he analyzes incisively the contentious problem of the authorship of the Federal Reserve Act. He shows how wisely Wilson reversed front on the trust problem and carried through the Trade Commission Act. The treatment of the farm problem is less satisfactory. At most points the author, whose pages are undocumented, relies rather upon public documents and newspapers than upon private papers. A treatment of *inner* forces is thus often lacking. Nor does Dr. Paxson even pretend to go beneath the surface in analyzing economic factors or cultural components of American life; he is not subtle or philosophic. But he does give an admirable account of the external phenomena of progressivism. He describes the social ferment of the time vigorously: the movements for controlling big business, distributing wealth, enfranchising women, ending child labor, attacking

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drink, restricting immigration, and so on, all mingled in a seething tide. He shows how the forces built up propagandist agencies and pressure groups; how they affected the whole American concept of government; and how, despite Mexico and Europe, they dominated the campaign of 1916. Labor and the progressive West won that battle for Wilson.

The other half of the book gives a notably sane and well-rounded discussion of the problems of war and neutrality. Again Wilson stands out not only as the central but the most admirable figure. He saw deeper into the roots of war than other Americans; he was far more determinedly neutral than most; he caught a quicker vision of the importance of a strenuous effort to end international anarchy. Mr. Paxson brings a careful knowledge of international law to the tangled skein of "belligerent pretension and neutral right." He wisely leans to the Newton D. Baker - Charles Seymour interpretation of these years, ascribing American entry into the war primarily to the German submarine war. While the Allies continually distorted the law of nations to their own advantage, their infractions involved no wrongs not remediable by apology or money; the German affronts were made intolerable by irremediable loss of life. He brings out the fact that before the election of 1916 Wilson served public notice that neutrality was becoming impossible. He also brings out realistically, as one group of writers fails to do, the alternative to the road to war. It was the abandonment of the whole historic claim of neutrals to use of the open sea, and by implication, of all other neutral rights on which a powerful belligerent chose to trample. And Mr. Paxson shows satisfactorily that before Wilson finally made up his mind for war, the Congressional majority and the major forces in public opinion had firmly made up theirs. The weak elements in this part of the book are the failure to examine the economic factors making for American entry; the scant attention given to the La-Follette group; the superficial treatment of propaganda; and again the lack of attention to personal documents, such as Lansing's posthumous book. But Mr. Paxson's general conclusions would have remained the same.

It is too soon to plumb the deeper wells of the period 1913-17. But here is a study as scholarly, sensible, and fair in most particulars as can now be written. It would be valuable under any circumstances; and it is especially valuable as a corrective to some works which have been much applauded simply because they were written to fit the passing mood of disillusionment, and not at all written to fit the facts.

Allan Nevins is professor of history at Columbia University. His latest book is a biography of Hamilton Fish, and he has recently edited an interesting collection of Brand Whitlock's letters and journals.

Saint and Feminist

ELIZABETH FRY. By Janet Whitney. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1936. $3.50.

Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

THIS biography is really two books in a single volume, of which one is excellent, and the other a somewhat hurried conclusion to an extraordinary life. Elizabeth Gurney, the charming Quaker girl and earnest young wife, finds here her best biography. Elizabeth Fry, the prison reformer, whose quiet common-sense and gentle confidence caused a world-wide revolution in penology—if indeed they did not create penology as a practical science—Elizabeth Fry is somewhat casually studied, probably because her life has been written in so many books.

There was, of course, only one personality, and the spiritual discipline of the Quaker child is the source of the triumphant humanitarianism of the woman. But beginnings of great careers are always interesting; it might be said are interesting in proportion to their seeming unimportance. The Gurney family is a particularly happy subject for such a study. The seven daughters were charming, and never more so than when they first appear in this volume playfully holding up the mail coach from Bristol. Father Gurney was a rich man, a Quaker, but not a "plain" one. His daughters seemed destined to escape from the lingering restrictions of a sect which had resolved never to let worldliness interfere with the inner light and as a fruit of that resolution had become rigid, respectable, rich, and sanctimonious.

But the Quaker idea still had life in it. Elizabeth, the young girl, loved dancing, music, and country life which in an England which Jane Austen was just then describing, had reached its peak of charm and of security. But something stirred in her soul, and is recorded in the quaint misspelling of her Journal. Something stirred and was brought into the light by the preaching and powerful personality of William Savery, an American Friend who was plain, but not sanctimonious. She loved him—that is clear—though because he was married she would not admit it to herself, but there was more than love in her response. The spark was passed on. Without fanaticism, without accepting the rigidities of her sect, she sadly gave up the gay world, its mirth and its music, married a Quaker, and took on the burdens of a young wife who had literally to live, eat, and commune with a Christian brotherhood and sisterhood.

And then surprisingly, with a family of children to care for, with her religious doubts still some of them unsettled, she took almost by accident one step ahead of the women of her time, ahead of the time itself, visited Newgate prison, and began a reform which in a few years got the ears of governments and spread through the civilized world.

It was easier, of course, for a Quaker woman to take leadership in this pre-feministic period, for Quaker women had always been granted equal spiritual and social rights with their men. And yet the first interest of this biography is the personal story of self-discipline and conversion which made of Elizabeth Fry's soul a quiet dynamo of energy.

ELIZABETH FRY READING TO THE PRISONERS AT NEWGATE, 1823.
Painting by Jerry Barrett, from "Elizabeth Fry."

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

The Troupers' Yule

IT was a rainy afternoon; I lay by the fireside in the Knothole in a stupor of most innocent lassitude. After a month on the road, and as the books gradually grew warm to the touch in this frosted cabin, it seemed unreal not to be in a hotel or a sleeping car. It occurred to me to wish Merry Christmas to those who perhaps need it most, and are least likely to be remembered by the sedentary. I mean the troupers of all sorts. Having shared—no matter how amateurishly—some of their anxieties and fatigues; even perhaps some of their satisfactions—I feel it in me to cry a fraternal halloo.

And by troupers I mean the one-night-stand. I mean Tom shows, road companies, acrobats, monologue artists, musicians, conjurers, itinerant preachers, and lecturers. I mean anybody whose hazard involves a personal appearance on some stage or platform and then—for whatever reason—a prompt get-away. May they find train and bus connections at reasonable hours; bed with a reading lamp; and the merciful all-night lunchroom for the soothing poached egg. May they find the hot bath when sorely needed, and the clean shirt likewise. Once a year, brothers, I enter your arduous fraternity for a few weeks, and I know whereof I speak. I know the queer twinge of seeing, in some strange town, Christmas decoration not your own. I bespeak you The Troupers' Yule—which is to give others the joy of surprise in something that no longer surprises yourself: and then to surprise yourself also.

I think I may have dozed: in a conscienceless lucidity I retraced glimpses of recent travel. *The Mercury,* streamline train from Detroit to Toledo. In the diner, green longitudinal settees, new shapes for utensils, Venetian blinds, indirect lighting. The engine sheathed with a great snouted hood, silvered driving-wheels emerging beneath. Doors to the diner opening by electric eye; other doors however with an uncomfortably sharp-edged handle. In all the lavatories, drawings by Rockwell Kent framed in saucepan steel. The crew's great pride in this superb train. Grief of the conductor when I said 60 miles in 60 minutes isn't so remarkable? "Look at the speed restrictions they got on us!" he cried. The question was, what food would be appropriate to eat in a streamline dining car? Pork chops? Spring Duckling? Sirloin Steak? I chose grilled sardines, just the thing both in shape and color.

I hear again the good Scots accent of Anna, chambermaid on the 18th floor of the Book-Cadillac, as she protested that all the newspaper stories about the King were "just publicity." And I hear the agitated voice of the Vizier, when a convivial bookseller was fixing to keep us up very late at the Ivanhoe Gardens (which you will find at 3000 North Clark Street, Chicago) "Let's make a definite plan to be in bed by five o'clock."

I think of the elevator boy in the hotel in Lynchburg, whose wife did a Sunday morning job of emergency laundry—*Love's Last Shift,* Colley Cibber would have called it. I see again, at the far end of the station platform at Fort Wayne, the little shack where I once hastily clambered out of the overalls after a ride from Chicago in the engine. I see the great mills of Gary, that fuming congeries of sootstained shacks and vast plants; a sight infernal, horrific; civilization in its shirtsleeves or (if you prefer) with its pants down. What a theme for a novelist, that brief seacoast of Indiana.

I think of the friendly parson who saw to it that I caught the midnight sleeper at Johnstown, Pa.; the college president who drove all the way back from Rockford to Chicago in the smallest hours; the children who got leave to come 80 miles from a Junior College in Texas to ask how to write essays. How might one answer so staggering a question?—And the Gift Department of Lasalle & Koch's department store, in Toledo, will sew on buttons for you.—At Horne's book department in Pittsburgh Joe Estabrook showed me the height, near the ceiling, to which the flood rose last March. He looked down from the balcony and saw the tables sodden with books floating across the floor.

The night before Edward VIII's abdication. Arrived at a secluded hotel in Back Bay, Boston, where the agent had reserved a room for the speaker to rest, bathe and change before proceeding to a distant suburb. Just one hour allowed for this desiderated hiatus.

The travelling soliloquist, modest in taste, surprised to find himself ushered to suite-de-luxe. Enormous sitting-room, strewn with padded furniture. Vague feeling that this must mean something; but what? However, has learned not to be long startled by anything. Begins to cast clothes about on various chairs and make self easy.

The telephone. Room-clerk: The reporters are waiting downstairs.—What reporters?—The reporters from all the papers.—How come, groans the traveller. No one but agent knows where we are; faithfully promised an hour's recess.—Peevishly phones agent; whose office reports that agent is taking a nap in same hotel, exhausted by entrepreneuring and has a grand opera performance going on that evening.—Great delight; joy to rouse agent from his undeserved nescience.—Calls agent, who protests innocence.—Agent suggests: say you can't see them.—Can't do that; old newspaper man myself; know how they feel; not their fault.—Oh, what the hell. Turn off bath water, resume shirt, phone Room Service. (Suggestion to travelling artists: north and east of Philadelphia, reporters prefer Scotch; south and west of same, rye or bourbon. In Philly, whatever you have; they'll probably roast you anyhow.)—Knock, knock. Four reporters and three photographers. Somewhat embarrassment on both sides; no one seems to know what it's all about. Photographer says, Is this a horserace picture?—Speaker explains he is humbly on his way to address High School Teachers of Brockton; why the morbid excitement?—Arrival of Scotch appeases situation slightly, but lady reporter (remembered by large initials G. D. on her belt) declines, which seems menacing.—Thought you were in Providence tonight, says one.—Astonishing, thinks trouper, how these Boston papers keep track of one; I *had* intended to go to Brockton by way of Providence, but found Boston easier.—Conversation turns briefly on the all-absorbing topic.—Friendly, pleasant people; and as they go, one lingers. I'll tip you off, he says. The City Editor was told LORD MARLEY was staying here. Go and get him on the King, was his instruction; and don't take NO for an answer.

Indiana, Pa? (said the agent)—oh, it's just outside Pittsburgh; practically a suburb; won't take any time at all to get out there.—So the trouper was not surprised to find it a 2½ hours drive by car; and a very pretty drive. Luckily it wasn't snowing.

Hervey Allen should be pleased to learn that the bridge at Saltsburg, near Indiana (I can't remember whether it's the Conemaugh River or the Kiski?) came through last spring's flood intact, though shored up with extra props. That was the bridge where Lieut. Allen, a massive Horatius, did solitary patrol in 1917. It is the great literary association of the neighborhood, and is always referred to as the Hervey Allen Bridge. Legends are still told of the beautiful colleen who used to put on her best flimsies, those spring days, and walk past in hope of exchanging an eye with the rugged pontiff; but his soldierly gaze was only for the lurking Boche. The State College for Teachers at Indiana hankers for Mr. Allen to come and renew his memories, by way

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of the rostrum; and I hope he will, it is a gay and hospitable place.

The only literary shrine I had anticipated in that neighborhood is the town of Greensburg. While still in college I discovered the Collected Poems of Rev. John Franklin Bair of Greensburg, which are (in spots) scarcely inferior to the famous triad of turgidity, Julia Moore, J. Gordon Coogler and Shepherd M. Dugger. I had opportunity for a glimpse, but only a glimpse, of the Indiana library's copy.

But the Guest Room at the State Teachers' College is also a shrine; my friendly hosts were telling me how many envoys of the Muse had sojourned there. The Abbey players, the Shawn dancers, Miss Cornelia Skinner, and only the week before Mr. Hugh Walpole. So we were startled, when he reached this haven, to find that the State Laundryman had slipped in and settled down. Excellent fellow, he was busy tinkering his portable radio which consoles his evenings on the road while inspecting the laundries of all State institutions. From him I learned something about chlorines, bleachers, sud condition and soft rinse.

For meditation, the bathroom seemed the best chance, so thither the trouper retired for some laundering of his own. It happens that adjoining that bath are the telephone booths, and the guest, peaceably in soak, overheard one side of a conversation which he took to himself. Evidently a he-student was calling a sheditto in another dormitory. The first words I caught evidently referred to that evening's lecture:

"What do you want to go to that kind of thing for?"

"— — —."

"What time does it start?"

"— — — ."

"Seven thirty, hey? Well, I'll wait around, but if you're not out before nine, we're sunk."

The lecturer saw to it that they weren't sunk.

So a Merry Christmas: not only to the troupers themselves, but to the generous and much-forgiving audience who make them possible.

Page Sir John Falstaff

"Give a Sherry Party!" cries an excited wine importer (Julius Wile Sons & Co.) advertising Dry Sack in the *New Yorker*. "The whole idea started in London."

Yes, and we can tell you where. At the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap.

We Prefer Alice M. Moran

SIR: For your Hands-Across-the-Sea Department. The tender that takes Americans off at Cherbourg is called *Alexis de Tocqueville*. In reciprocity, one of the tugs that help the *Normandie* to bed might be renamed *Alice B. Toklas*.

ELMER DAVIS

R. M. S. Berengaria

A LITHOGRAPH FROM "INTERREGNUM."

Grosz Lithographs

INTERREGNUM. By George Grosz. Introductory Comment by John Dos Passos. New York: The Black Sun Press. 1936. *Limited Edition.* $50.

Reviewed by WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

As remarkable a collection of lithographs as has appeared in many a long day is this one sponsored by Caresse Crosby of The Black Sun Press. It is the first collection of lithographs by George Grosz, the eminent artist, since his exile from Germany for anti-Nazi utterances. Like his former one, "Ecce Homo," which brought about his exile, here is satire like biting acid that concerns itself with the bestial aspects of modern city life. John Dos Passos points out in his most intelligent introduction that "seeing is a process of imagination."

Dos Passos thinks we are becoming an "eye-minded people" rather than word-minded. He points out too that now America has become the refuge of the traditions of Western Europe in the arts as well as in science. More specifically he says: "The fact that George Grosz, the great visual satirist of our time, has come to live here, has taken out papers, and considers himself an American, makes you feel good about this country." Dos Passos compares Grosz's drawings of a dying European culture to Goya's of the agony of Europe a century before.

Here are sixty-four black and white drawings reproduced by hand-lithography and one four-color lithograph made and signed by the artist. The edition is strictly limited to two hundred and eighty numbered copies in hand-moulded Rives paper, together with twenty lettered copies *hors commerce*. The text is hand-set. The book is a collector's item both for admirers of the art of Grosz and of the prose of Dos Passos.

Amateur History

(*Continued from page* 4)

Cabin" and "The Jungle." The only Emerson mentioned in the 875 pages is the army surgeon who owned Dred Scott. Public schools and tax-supported universities, a significant expression of the democratic spirit, are passed over in silence. Most of the movements for humanitarian reform are ignored. The same is true of journalism, the sciences, the fine arts, and a host of other interests.

In view of the wide gaps in the author's knowledge and his reckless use of facts, it might be expected that he would hesitate to pass magistral judgments on historical personages. But such is not the case. "A Frances Wright, who was a wealthy woman of English descent," he remarks, ". . . seems to have been crackbrained" and "may have been definitely insane." Further, he adds, she "was an atheist and free lover." Woodward's psychiatric notions aside, Frances Wright, the honored friend of Bentham and Lafayette, was a Scotchwoman; she was at most an agnostic; and as for free love she held to the view that ideally the marriage relation should be cemented by mutual respect and desire rather than by legal compulsion. In practice, she agitated for more liberal divorce laws and later herself entered the marriage estate. Other examples of his *obiter dicta* need not be given, but I can recall no other historical writer so free in plastering men and measures with forthright epithets, such as "asinine," "preposterous," "fatuous," "buncombe," "eyewash," "hokum," "emotional asininity," "ineffable trash," and "piffle." "In those days," Woodward somewhere observes of a presumably less enlightened generation, "people in general were excessively dogmatic. They may not have known what they were talking about, but they thought they did."

The reader has no difficulty in making a choice collection of Woodward's convictions and prejudices. He is against Negro slavery, imperialism, interference with free speech, and a high tariff, at least in theory. He condemns capitalism, though at the same time he holds out hope of salvation through coöperative marketing and national planning. He disapproves America's entry into the World War, while displaying reminiscent anger at the sinking of the *Lusitania* as "savage and bestial." Parading usually as a militant democrat, he thinks the Filipinos' desire for independence "a mystery which the present historian is unable to elucidate," for they enjoyed material and civil advantages as an American dependency. Some reviewers have perceived a consistent philosophy behind this array of attitudes. To my mind, however, the trend of his thought is neither leftward nor rightward. Like the volume as a whole, it is just Woodward.

Arthur M. Schlesinger is professor of history at Harvard.

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Caravan Veering Left

THE NEW CARAVAN. Edited by Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford, and Paul Rosenfeld. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1936. $3.95.

Reviewed by GORHAM MUNSON

"THE NEW CARAVAN" is the best edited and most readable of the series which began in 1927 and is now continued after a lapse of five years. But it presents to the reviewer, no less than its predecessors did, the problem of how to write within reasonable space limits a review that is not stuffed with compromises. Shall one review the authors? There are in this volume forty-five authors, which means that many of them can receive only cursory mention, if any at all, and the best—in "The New Caravan" they are the poet Wallace Stevens and the novelist Paul Horgan—will get only a descriptive paragraph. Shall one deal chiefly with the bulk-impression of contemporary American writing as they are given by these writers and then generalize on the present condition of our letters? That seems unfair to the individual writers. Or finally shall one review the purpose, the tastes, and the standards of the editors, Messrs. Kreymborg, Mumford, and Rosenfeld? There are reasons why something should be said about the editorial direction. What one finally does, under the circumstances, is to make a stab at reviewing the authors, at generalizing about current American writing, and at evaluating the editing, saying too little about each, quite uncomfortable in being limited to opinions to support which no space exists, and certain in the knowledge that one is making more enemies in a single review than one could amass in forty separate reviews.

If I say that certain contributions to "The New Caravan"—those by Delmore Schwartz, Emjo Basshe, Dorothy Norman, Josephine Strongin, and Marsden Hartley—are worthless as literature, and pass on, these authors are quite entitled to resent the dogmatic judgment. Nor are matters helped much if I add that Mr. Schwartz's play is on the phoney side of literary experiment and is extremely pedantic, that Mr. Basshe's scene is riotously inchoate, that the verse of Miss Norman and Miss Strongin is "album verse," accomplished enough for private circulation but not up to publication standards, and that Mr. Hartley's prose violates proprieties of tone-management and is a wondrous specimen of deliquescent impressionism. There is no pleasure, I repeat, in delivering uncomplimentary opinions without the opportunity of reasoning about them.

We can all, however, rejoice that what Henry James called the "shapely *nouvelle*" and even "our ideal, the beautiful and blest *nouvelle*" is handsomely represented in "The New Caravan," and I would particularly praise "Far from Cibola," by Paul Horgan, "Big Boy Leaves Home," by Richard Wright, "Vain Voyage," by Fred Rothermell, and "Bushel of Wheat; Bushel of Barley," by Paul Corey, but emphatically not the turgid, arty novelette by Edna Bryner or the mawkish one by Meridel Le Sueur.

Mr. Horgan's "Far from Cibola" is extremely interesting in its composition. Laid in New Mexico, his story starts from half a dozen points at once, converges on the village square where a spontaneous protest meeting against the tardiness of relief funds occurs, is unified by the accidental killing of a youth in the crowd, and then spreads fanwise as the crowd goes home—a beautiful flowing in to the center of characters stationed on a circumference, and then a reversal of the flow. Or one might say that the form of the story is an hourglass. The important thing is that Mr. Horgan's narrative is bounded; for all the complexity of the design, the mood suffuses every part and has its own edge.

THE EDITORS OF "THE NEW CARAVAN"
Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford, and Paul Rosenfeld.

> It was the land of the Seven Golden Cities of Cibola, that had wooed the northward Spaniards so long ago. . . . Crossing the very plains and mountains where the terrible wealth was promised to be, they were always far from Cibola. . . . What wealth they ever found in that land was created by man with the earth, and toiled for in obedience to the seasons.

The three "discoveries" of "The New Caravan" are the Negro writer, Mr. Wright, the "proletarian" writer, Mr. Corey, both of whose novelettes are remarkable for power, and, among the poets, Mr. Reuel Denny.

Three women writers, Aline Bernstein, Bessie Breuer, and Margery Latimer, will startle the reader to reflections he cannot formulate. Astounding intimacy, a feminine "hysteria," a note as different from English women writing as are Faulkner and Hemingway from the male English writer—what is in the forming here? I do not know. But Mrs. Bernstein can write sensitive lyrical prose, and Miss Breuer, seemingly on an anarchic bender, concludes with prose of such pure intensity as Virginia Woolf might give all her erudition to compose.

I prefer Mr. Kreymborg's earlier nimble vers libre to his verse-play in the E. A. Robinson manner. Most of the verse is competent (Raymond Holden, Aiken, Bynner, Evan Shipman, Fitzell, and others), but might be called "magazine verse." The "Five Psalms" of Phelps Putnam are distinguished simplicity. There are good short stories (Ernest Brace, Raymond Holden, Clarkson Crane, and others), and a poor dreamy story—yes, there's a man in it floundering down a muddy road—by Sherwood Anderson. Philip Stevenson's "Art and Gert," a study of a male stenographer and his wife out of a bordello, seems literary, written from the outside. There is one critical essay, a slow-moving argument by Sheldon Cheney, that the American theatre should go left.

One turns back to the second contribution in the book, "Mr. Burnshaw and the Statue," by Wallace Stevens, superb music and a rich meaning difficult of exegesis, the one poem in the book destined for the pleasure of Swift's Prince Posterity.

And now to generalize. American writing, on the evidence before us, is becoming more expert and better disciplined. The ravages of the financial blight are beginning to be given powerful treatment by artists, not by propagandists. The feelings of these artists are humane, but over the minds of many hovers an abstraction called Leftism inherited from the last century but made obsolescent by post-war economic discoveries. Occasionally, as in Bob Brown's "But We'll Make It Red!," the abstraction shapes the material.

Of the editors we may say that their standards sag amazingly at times, that they do welcome new talents, and that they justify their "over-all" choice of material by a concept of America that neither they nor any man can lure down from the intense inane. Like the famous Oozlem Bird, their America when pursued disappears into its insides and emits cries of derision. It is not so with two of their contributors: William Carlos Williams, who contributes the libretto for an opera on George Washington, and Jean Toomer, who concludes the volume with a long poem. Dr. Williams gets his America out of a loving absorption in our history. Mr. Toomer in verse often too colloquial visualizes a future America of men and women who have achieved individuality in the exact Scriptural sense.

Gorham Munson is a lecturer at the New School for Social Research.

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The Collapse of the Plantation System

PREFACE TO PEASANTRY. By Arthur F. Raper. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press. 1936. $3.50.

Reviewed by JOHN D. ALLEN

GREENE county, Georgia, was settled late in the eighteenth century; Macon county, about fifty years later. Dominated by agrarian-capitalist planters both became centers of plantation culture; their towns and villages gradually took on something of the atmosphere of Charleston or Savannah; from them came, in time, an adequate share of the South's politicians, lawyers, and rare creative minds. Together, Greene and Macon are representative of what is called the Black Belt—the approximately two hundred counties centering in Georgia but stretching from Virginia to eastern Texas, in which Negroes outnumber the whites—Greene especially representative of the older and more decadent counties nearer the coast, Macon of the younger counties formed after the first-tilled lands began to fail. Fifteen years ago, the boll weevil invaded Greene in force, bringing swift disaster to a cotton culture which had been declining since the late eighties. Less severely damaged by the weevil, agriculture in Macon apparently reached the peak only during the nineteen-twenties; it has now leveled off and seems ready to continue essentially the pattern of poverty-ridden Greene.

These two counties provide the data from which the author concludes that the collapse of plantation economy is "a preface to peasantry." The data cannot be questioned. At various times and for extensive periods Mr. Raper studied at first-hand in both counties the workings of the plantation system. Its historic phases, its effects on all the institutions of the Black Belt, the standards of living it sets, the relations it imposes as between man and land and man and man, its influence on population movements, its devious adaptations to the New Deal, even the recreational and leisure time activities it permits landlord, tenant, share-cropper, and wage hand—all these and much more he patiently, carefully examined. The results of the study, amply illustrated with tables, charts, and dozens of revealing photographs, are here set forth in an array which leaves no doubt about the author's thoroughness.

Nor will any fair-minded Southerner care to contest the steps in Mr. Raper's analysis, nor the immediate conclusion to which it leads. Those steps cannot be summarized here, but they reduce to this: The plantation system, whether evolving or declining, exploits land and labor, reduces the mass of whites and blacks to poverty, keeps them in ignorance, destroys for them even the hope which once, in a nominal democracy, they may have cherished. It ultimately bankrupts the owners and drives from the soil the more alert wage workers and tenants. The families that remain, "schooled in dependency, unaccustomed to responsibility, without experience in community leadership," tend to become small renters or owners, characterized by a very low if relatively secure plane of living. The result is not the appearance of "the traditional independent American farmer" but the emergence of a permanent peasant class; "the collapse of the Black Belt plantation system is a preface to peasantry." So long as the economy of the South as a whole is determined by the presence of the plantation, the region "can hope to be nothing but the Orient of this nation." And finally, the South cannot continue to hold the Negro in the ditch without continuing to lie there beside him.

Unpalatable facts, inescapable facts; and Mr. Raper has done an excellent job of presenting and synthesizing them. Unfavorable criticism of the study, if one were anxious to criticize, could rest only on his failure to offer a definite program. True, if living conditions of rural people are to be improved, he sees the need not merely for an "adaptation of institutional programs" but for "an economic reorganization which will increase family incomes and foster the independence and self-direction of all the people." Nor will mechanizing the plantation do the trick; a "constructive land policy" is essential. But beyond this point Mr. Raper gives no directions; and to this point most Southerners, including the soberer tories, would not too hesitantly follow. Probably no serious objection would be raised by even the Southern Agrarians.

But the reader will quickly learn that absence of a detailed plan implies no agreement with the preachments of "I'll Take My Stand" or that more recent Agrarian production, "Who Owns America?" To their spirit Mr. Raper's book is wholly opposed; its emphasis is all on facts and the plain inferences which the facts compel. Nor is the author obligated to formulate a specific program. It is enough that, preferring truth to fiction, he has produced an admirable summary and analysis to which any realizable future program must be greatly indebted.

John D. Allen teaches journalism at Mercer University, Macon, Ga.

Modern Woodcuts

WOOD ENGRAVING OF THE 1930'S. Reviewed by Clare Leighton. New York: The Studio Publications. 1936. $4.50.

THIS special winter number of *The Studio* complements *The New Woodcut* edited by Malcolm Salaman. The classification of the material according to method of approach, rather than by nationality, is an improvement upon the arrangement of the earlier volume and the critical comments of Clare Leighton, which precede each of the six sections, tell the layman, in non-technical terms, exactly what he should know about the making of modern wood-engravings. Like all anthologies of modern art this contains much which is strained and sterile, but on the whole the reproductions are well chosen and varied and Miss Leighton's comments frank and informing. Fortunately, her own admirable work requires no introduction.

Emerson Abroad

THE LONELY WAYFARING MAN: EMERSON AND SOME ENGLISHMEN. By Townsend Scudder. New York: Oxford University Press. 1936. $2.50.

Reviewed by ALEXANDER COWIE

THE American scholar, new style, does not wear his scholarship on his sleeve but carries it in a back pocket, whence he will fetch it upon demand for the bibliographically minded reader. He keeps his text clean by using a minimum of direct quotation, preferring to absorb his sources rather than to display them. By looking to his language as much as to his facts, he avoids giving his work the gaunt, angular appearance of many earlier studies. He is the scholar writing instead of the scholar digging. Mr. Van Wyck Brooks was one of the first to make conspicuous use of the newer method. Now comes a book in approximately the same tradition, Townsend Scudder's slender but illuminating biographical study, "The Lonely Wayfaring Man: Emerson and Some Englishmen."

Mr. Scudder makes his book out of Emerson's trips abroad and the personal relationships they created. The first trip was in search of health and heroes. Health came, but heroes—Landor, Coleridge, Wordsworth—had dwindled into men, vulnerable on the side of garrulousness, intolerance, or senile egotism. Fortunately there was also Carlyle, still sniffing eagerly the brisk air of metaphysic, his deep growl against society not yet fully developed. There were also (especially on the second trip) many of lesser breed but more open mind: Alexander Ireland, David Scott, William Allingham, Harriet Martineau, Crabb Robinson, John Sterling, Arthur Clough. With a good eye for color and line, Mr. Scudder inserts a background for each figure and shows Emerson moving into it to meet his man. Mary Ann Evans also comes into focus for a moment, as do Emerson's difficult American ambassadors, Bronson Alcott and Margaret Fuller. Everywhere Emerson was surrounded by admiring groups. Philanthropists and "friends of humanity" (Carlyle called them "a poor washy set") thronged round. Thousands honored him at public dinners. A few dissenters there were, represented by George Gilfillan, whose first rapture at encountering Emerson's heartening message was to give way to a Calvinistic shudder when he realized the full extent of the Yankee's bland heresies. Bigger men were Clough and Carlyle. A good chapter treats of Clough, with whom Emerson went a long way in friendship, pained though he was by Clough's "incredible recoil." Being a friend of Carlyle was an ordeal. Carlyle became ruffled: this Emerson who had once come to Craigenputtock as a disciple was now a colleague and, what is more, a colleague spouting all manner of "moonshiny" doctrine ill-adapted to cure the crude sores of society. Carlyle, Emerson thought, had developed a bad habit of sneering and snapping. But wounds could be healed, and the friends

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could be reconciled—especially if the Atlantic lay between them.

Mr. Scudder's book succeeds not so much through surface originality as through enrichment of thoughts already familiar in outline. The manuscript of the "Journals" and a few very interesting unpublished letters do not tempt him (thank Heaven!) to fashion "a new Emerson." By mastering his materials and artfully combining them into a leisurely narrative carried by a graceful style, he has proved that a good work of scholarship need not be a bad work of art. His melodious prose would be the better for more robust tones, more woodnotes. Otherwise he has performed a task that merits general gratitude: he has made a true book about Emerson.

Alexander Cowie is on the faculty of Wesleyan University.

A Variety of Vessels

FORTY FAMOUS SHIPS. By H. B. Culver and Gordon Grant. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1936. $7.50.

Reviewed by CARL C. CUTLER

A COMPANION volume to "The Book of Old Ships," and displaying the same worthy qualities of skill and erudition, it is safe to predict that this new book will appeal to a wider range of readers. The flavor of the former was mildly technical: this latter is frankly and primarily concerned with romance, adventure, and high achievement. If here and there the massive timbering of research and sound learning shadows through—as in a staunch old admiralty model—it is, if not regrettable, at least unintentional, for artist and author set out, avowedly, to "prepare historical pills, with sugar coatings."

And here they are—forty, plus three—the "sugar coatings" comprising eight small folio ship portraits beautifully done in colors, thirty-six full-page pen-and-ink portraits, and some dozens of minor nautical bits, pleasingly compounded with factual ingredients both tonic and nutritive, curious and commonplace. Mr. Culver's prose flows easily and variably—running the amiable gamut of sprightly conversation; now casual, now humorous, now relapsing into unguarded moments of sober intentness.

Some, who have delved deeply in maritime graveyards, will fume a bit at the inclusion of such over-publicized vessels as the British *Sovereign of the Seas,* the *Flying Cloud, Monitor,* and one or two more; and doubtless alternative selections might have been made from a substantial list of worthy candidates. Objections of this sort are effectively, and perhaps justly, forestalled in the author's preface, which—as a plea in confession and avoidance, and something more—merits the reader's special attention.

The text contains small matter for dispute. Preëminently a book for the general reader, this volume will also appeal to those primarily interested in fine, accurate marine pictures and the essential data concerning a representative group of ships, past and present.

Carl C. Cutler is secretary of the Marine Historical Association.

The rich fruits of a distinguished editorship . . .

Seven Years' Harvest

NOTES ON CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE

by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

author of THE AGE OF CONFIDENCE

IF literary criticism, as Anatole France said, reveals the adventures of a soul among masterpieces, these notes on the contemporary literary scene by the editor-emeritus of The Saturday Review, are above and beyond *criticism.* They, too, relate the adventures of a sensitive mind and a warm heart among the masterpieces . . . but what is even more important, they record the adventures of a man among men in the fast-changing life of today. Henry Seidel Canby is not a critic of aesthetics. He prefers to move, a suave and urbane observer, through the vital, living literature of this modern age. He writes beautifully, forcefully, significantly, about this world of here and now. We reprint below a few opinions:

"IT IS a bookman's budget of the passing years annotated from week to week, a 'current intellectual history,' as Mr. Canby calls it. . . . It is a critical miscellany of life and literature, of the very recently dead and the vigorously living . . . the best of The Saturday Review and one of the best estimates of the merits and demerits of our modern life in literature."
—*N. Y. Times.*

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"THERE IS a quiet charm in all that he writes, and on analysis it seems to spring from the fact that he himself belongs to the age of confidence. A revealing, highly illuminated piece of critical work, this book is a completion of what was written as the various events took place, by one of our most careful, sophisticated and cultured observers."
—*Chicago Journal of Commerce.*

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—*San Diego Union.*

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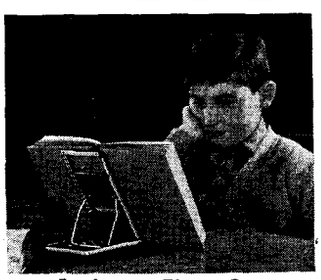
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Art of the Night

By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

THE two recent productions of "Hamlet" on the New York stage must in at least one respect evoke a contumelious snort for the directors responsible for them. I allude, of course, to the deletions of Hamlet's speeches to Ophelia at the beginning of the players' scene. That directors are given to a queasy timidity when it comes to Shakespeare's bawdy lines is not news. While in no case are they to be excused for imposing their own conception of morality upon the greatest of dramatic writers, there may yet in certain instances be a measure of absolution for them. Such instances are when the passages themselves are wholly extraneous and not essential to the main current of the dramas in which they appear. But when, as in "Hamlet," they are a vital and necessary part of the drama and when their deletion rids what follows of sense and logic and even invests it with an air of the ridiculous, then—surely—the directors are to be viewed not merely as puritanical cowards but as ignominious squint-sconces.

In both the McClintic and Howard presentations, the chief of Hamlet's pornographic remarks to Ophelia are, as observed, cut from the text, presumably lest they offend the audience. That their deletion, however, even more sorely offends Shakespeare the directors elect to overlook, that is, granting that they understand Shakespeare, which seems problematical. If Hamlet's lines in point are sacrificed and are not heard by Ophelia, what logical reason is there under the critical heavens for Ophelia's surprising excursion into a similar, if somewhat milder, pornography in the mad scene? In other words, without the sexual cue provided to her by Hamlet, how are the allusions of Ophelia, a pure, unsullied, and almost disembodied spirit, to be explained logically, psychologically, psychoanalytically, or even theatrically? The whole thing becomes muddled and nonsensical, although it is to be said for the directors' comfort and self-contentment that I have yet to encounter a playgoer or a drama critic who, upon noting this customary abortion of Shakespeare's meaning and purpose, has ever either noticed it or voiced his disapproval.

Why directors should so invariably be frightened to death in the face of Shakespearean bawdry we have no means of knowing nor even guessing. Is it their belief that present-day audiences are too tender for it? If it is, they only indicate thereby their peculiar unacquaintance with such audiences. Wycherley's "The Country Wife," which contains more impudicity than any three of Shakespeare's plays, is at the moment playing with negligible cutting to audiences who apparently revel in its sexual ribaldry. In all of Shakespeare's uniformly expunged bawdry there is only one word that has not thus far been spoken from a New York stage in the plays of moderns, and that one word is French. Every other word or phrase which faint-hearted producers cut out of his plays has been heard freely in plays by even the sorriest hacks, and no audience has lifted its voice in uneasiness or complaint.

The day of audiences' squeamishness went into the discard full twenty and more years ago. It is almost impossible for us of today to believe that audiences of that time were shocked by the use of the word *rape* in a play by William Hurlbut or by the use of *God damn* and *bastard* in a play by Clyde Fitch. In more recent seasons, in point of fact, the local stage has become so outspoken that there has been some concern expressed for it even on the part of the more fastidious bartenders, longshoremen, and drama critics. In all the lexicon of four-letter words but two remain still to be heard across the footlights; all the rest have had and are having their theatrical day. One, never under any circumstances allowed its Shakespearean hearing, was spoken nightly a few years ago in a play about Hollywood that enjoyed a three months' New York run. Another, regularly prohibited to Shakespeare, is a standby in revue blackout sketches. Still another, generally disallowed the Shakespearean stage, has been heard in no less than two dozen plays by Broadway scribblers. And one, that Shakespeare at his bawdiest never wrote into a play, is one of the biggest laugh-getters in the burlesque houses.

What is denied Shakespeare, in short, is freely permitted to our present novelists from James Joyce to James T. Farrell on the one hand and to the Brothers Minsky on the other. The hero of the greatest of the stage's tragedies is gagged, while characters in the cheapest dishes of tripe may say what they will. Even in the direction of comedy, Shakespeare beholds himself made mock of at the hands of producing stupidity. It is seldom, if ever, for example, that the Nurse in "Romeo and Juliet" does not find deleted her ribald sexual animadversions in the scene with Lady Capulet, thus completely destroying the effect of her subsequent lofty affectation of displeasure at Mercutio's ribaldry, and the juicy humor of the whole character along with it.

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 142)

DANIEL WEBSTER—
"TO MRS. PAGE."

Among all our good people of Boston not one in a thousand sees the sun rise once a year . . . Their idea of the morning is that it is that part of the day which comes along after a cup of coffee and a beefsteak, or a piece of toast.

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The New Books

Biography

BRITISH AUTHORS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. Edited by Stanley J. Kunitz. Wilson. 1936. $5.

Like its predecessors, "Authors Today and Yesterday," "Living Authors," and "The Junior Book of Authors," this is an invaluable reference book. It contains brief but competent biographies of at least a thousand persons, written with careful attention to accuracy but couched in readable form, with specific reference to the works of the authors under notice and listings of books about them and their work. On the whole the distribution of space seems well planned and the inclusions well justified. The great galaxy of writers of the nineteenth century, of course, gets full representation and ample discussion, and minor notabilities are comprehensively covered. It is perhaps surprising to find no mention of such authors as Mrs. Humphry Ward, the best of whose work was done before the turn of the century, and Beatrice Harraden, whose "Ships That Pass in the Night" was a sensational success in the nineties, but on the other hand there are fairly long entries for such novelists as the Baroness Tautphoeus, the Duchess, and Sir Samuel Baker (whose one work of fiction, "Cast Up by the Sea," is duly noted along with his travel chronicles). The book is profusely illustrated with portraits and should prove indispensable to all those whose work or interest demands information on writers.

A. L.

SAGITTARIUS RISING. By Cecil Lewis. Harcourt, Brace. 1936. $2.50.

The unborn author of the future settling down to a half-million word dramatization of some phase of the World War will be in a very happy position. Finding material will be the least of his difficulties. For once the armies were articulate and surprisingly literate.

The problem of the future will be one of value; to distinguish between the genuine and the synthetic. Was war the jolly prank of the actual contemporary writers like Ian Hay; were the post-war authors grimly veracious or merely disgruntled?

Cecil Lewis's "Sagittarius Rising" ranks among the authentic. His book has as much historical interest for the present as for the future, for in the air yesterday is history. Busses become crates almost before they go up; no doubt many a pilot not born when Mr. Lewis began to fly in 1915 has never even heard of a longeron or a nacelle, a Pitôt tube or a monosoupape. To their sleek-accustomed eyes the elaborately trussed canary cages, "the whole contraption held together with piano wire with which it was festooned in every direction — lift wires, landing wires, drift wires, bracing wires," would present a pleasantly rustic character. Even for those of us who saw them it is difficult to realize that the cars of today commonly travel as fast as the planes of yesterday "whose piano wires sang like a Jew's harp every time she touched sixty."

But Mr. Lewis's book cannot be passed off merely as a repository of antique curiosae. There is far more in it than that, for he has imagination and a power of observation which combine to recreate the past. His outstanding quality perhaps is his descriptive sense; his knack of coining the mot juste.

Mr. Lewis began to fly when barely seventeen. He was commissioned before he was eighteen. The book is the story of his war career which was one of courage and distinction. He served in observation and fighting squadrons. He was never an ace in the sense of a Ball, a Bishop, or a Guynemer. Probably he had too much sensitivity (he wanted to write poetry but found that he did not do it well enough and gave up) and lacked the cold concentration of the successful air fighter. But he knew what it was like to shoot down an enemy and his description of a dog-fight will not readily be forgotten. There is little conscious dramatism. Without apparent strain Mr. Lewis prefers meiosis to hyperbole. It is the modest account, simple and straightforward, of a man who was not only a skilful pilot but also—he would be the last to deny it—a lucky one. But then luck always follows skill.

A. W. S.

Fiction

BENEDICTION. By Claude Silve. Appleton-Century. 1936. $2.50.

"An arrival, a departure: an Italian coming with her lute to a French château, then tears, and a pause . . . what should I have had to say if I had not spoken of the château?" Thus the narrator sums up "Benediction" and apologizes for its lack of backbone. Nor does she exaggerate, for more than half of this Prix Femina novel of last year is entirely given over to such a piling up of atmosphere as has not been seen in fiction since the great Romantics flourished. Dampard, the mysterious old château of the Marquise de Bradès, dominates the book as it did the Ile-de-France landscape of which Claude Silve writes so lovingly. With a careful art more reminiscent of the decorator's profession than of the novelist's, the author has arranged a series of exquisitely detailed pictures of life in this country bailiwick of the Faubourg St. Germain, where nothing has changed since Louis-Philippe, where Bishops in full robes still sweep formally across the polished parquet, and gnome-like old servitors peer from all corners of the mouldering edifice, ready to anticipate Mme. la Marquise's every wish.

Such a book is necessarily limited in scope and appeal. The noble lady who calls herself Claude Silve for literary purposes is mistress of the field she has chosen,—so much so, in fact, that at times her sheer virtuosity as a creator of images seems on the verge of gongorism. However, Mrs. Wharton, the *Action Française*, and M. Henri de Régnier vouch for her, and no doubt a few exquisites in

(*Continued on page* 22)

Edna St. Vincent Millay

AND HER TIMES

by Elizabeth Atkins

●

WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

writes in *The Saturday Review:* "It is most unusual for a living poet to have such a thorough analysis of her work made in her lifetime. . . . There is a very good presentation of Miss Millay's artistic development against a background of the changing attitude toward life and art in America. . . . Miss Atkins also delves deeply into the chief influences that have shaped Miss Millay's philosophy of life and her art, bringing a scholarly mind to bear upon the analysis of her style. . . . This is a book of ardent enthusiasm as well as of scholarly acumen."

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read the book in manuscript and said it "showed a thorough study of modern poetry and discriminating comments. . . ."

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The PHŒNIX NEST

CONTEMPORARY POETRY: BY WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

THE leading poet in California today is *Robinson Jeffers*. When I lived in California it was *George Sterling*. There is also the grand old poet and satirist, *Charles Erskine Scott Wood*, of Los Gatos, whose "The Poet in the Desert" is salient in the annals of American verse. California can claim distinguished women poets, too. In the old days there was *Ina Coolbrith*, and today *Marie De L. Welch, Hildegarde Flanner, Helen Hoyt*—and *Genevieve Taggard*, although she is now commonly regarded as an Easterner—are distinguished names on the roster. But I wish to speak particularly this week of the work of *Sara Bard Field* (the wife of Charles Erskine Scott Wood) who not only seems to me one of the finest spirits of our time in the struggle for better social and economic conditions, but a poet who has accomplished a great deal. It is my custom in talking on poetry about the country to mention in order of their publication three long poems by American women that seem to me to prove that women poets, equally with men, are capable of sustained work in narrative verse. We have had *Anna Hempstead Branch's* "Nimrod," *Lola Ridge's* "Firehead," and most recently *Sara Bard Field's* "Barabbas," published a few years ago by Albert and Charles Boni. So good a critic as *Max Eastman* has said of the last-named, "There are many passages as fine as any poetry of its kind in American literature."

Now Random House has brought out a new volume by Sara Bard Field, a collection of shorter poems, "Darkling Plain" (Random House: $2). It is a beautiful example of book-making, with typography by the famous Grabhorn Press. But the contents are the important thing. The title, of course, is taken from Matthew Arnold. The prefatory "Note to Fellow Marxists" states very clearly and sanely the inevitable position of the poet when asked to be "a revolutionary mouthpiece." No poet has ever been able to write good poetry to order. His or her method of "indirection . . . approach on the oblique line," is an inner necessity. The more conscientiously the poet feels his responsibility to the art he practices, the more surely he must search his own depths for himself, and write not to anyone's order but by the prompting of his most personal, sincere, and far-seeing moments. This Mrs. Field has done. Hers is a noble book. It is a beautiful book. It is divided into four sections, the first dealing with the subject of Death, as the author says, "in no consistent mood—the enduring privilege of agnosticism." This is no ordinary poetry concerning death. When the poet ends one poem

The majesty of sorrow is that he
Who darkly comes to all, omitting none,
Has never come before to anyone

she strictly states the pang we have all felt—"But this could not happen to *me!*" She interprets the universal human dismay. "Diver" is perhaps her best poem concerning death, and a finely imaginative sonnet:

How like a diver, headlong to the sea
You plunged to death and with what powerful stroke
Swam underneath before the surface broke
To your remote return—but not to me.
Too far that rising was from certainty
For even owl-eyed anguish to evoke
An apparition bodiless as smoke
Of you or of your shore of destiny.
But once, in dream, from dark wave to white sand,
A little breathless but with no dismay
You leaped and brushed the drops of ebon spray
From your bright body with a careless hand.
Then turned as one familiar with the way
And vanished, followed by a laughing band.

A most moving poem also, of a marmoreal beauty, is "Still Marriage," a poem to which I think Landor would have paid tribute. "Shared Heritage," the longest poem in the book, is a subtly psychological allegory. The superstition concerning nature in "November 2 A.M. Conspiracy" is wholly delightful. "Winter Revery" is a very hushed achievement. And the love poems in the last section contain one most extraordinary poem, "The Flight." Yet I do not know whether this coruscatingly imaginative transfiguring of physical love actually moves me more than the poignantly human "Death's Anodyne." In any event both are remarkable, and the sonnets of love that complete the book are rich in language, sensitive, and even Puckish by sudden change. Such a book as this uplifts the spirit. It is valiant.

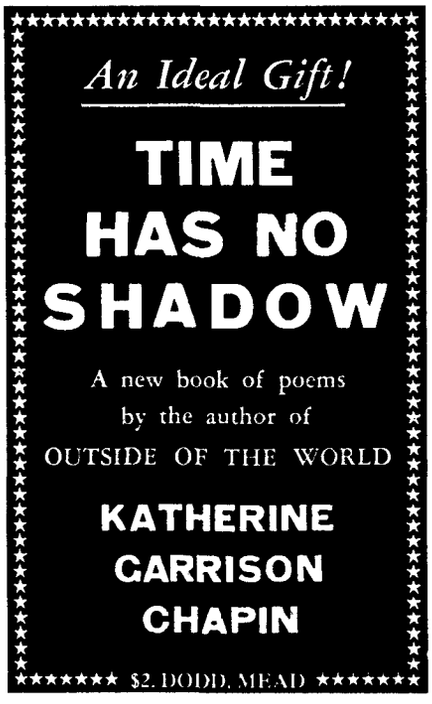
Conrad Aiken has for some time been titling every poem he published in any periodical a "Prelude." Now in "Time in the Rock" (Scribners: $2.50) his "Preludes to Definition" are all gathered together. Mr. Aiken is, of course, a Pulitzer Prize winner for poetry and like Bynner reflects credit on the halls of Harvard. Just how to describe his new book is difficult. If you enjoy the speculations of a most subtle mind, shown forth in imagery and musical language, you will enjoy this book. Certain types of mentality will find it evasive and too fluid a type of poetry for their satisfaction. They will object to Aiken's adjuration:

Be then of madness all compact—
singular soul whose word is act—
singular act whose word is sole
embassy of angelic whole—!
—be but a beam that wounds a sound
on unforeknowing indifferent ground.

Indeed, the poem of which this is a verse, partakes of such madness as made great "Tom o' Bedlam's Song." But wisdom and deep experience of life are in this book also. I don't pretend to know always what Aiken is talking about, but I regard him as a most deft musician and a thorough artist.

The Black Sun Press of 274 Madison Avenue, New York City, publishes, under the direction of Caresse Crosby, a most attractive small volume of "The Collected Poems of James Joyce." The frontispiece is from a crayon portrait of the author by Augustus John reproduced by Jacomet of Paris. The poems included are from "Chamber Music" (Viking Press), and "Pomes Penyeach" (printed abroad). There is a poem, "Ecce Puer," never before included in any edition. This edition is limited to eight hundred copies at five dollars a copy. Strangely enough Joyce's poetic style is entirely traditional, even reminiscent of certain Caroline singers, though extremely musical, and the gloomy grandeur of "Nightpiece" is most impressive. In a couplet, one might say: "Brief and very choice are the poems of James Joyce."

I have not space this week to treat *Edward Doro's* long poem "Shiloh" (Putnam's: $2.50). It is subtitled "Fragments on a Famous Theme" and is the story of Jesus. I read it in manuscript, before various revisions had been made, and felt that it was not as successful as several of Doro's earlier poems which I intensely admire. But that must not be taken as a review of the book, which I shall discuss more in detail next time, as I shall Virginia Moore's volume. *Edgar Lee Masters* tells an interesting story in "The Golden Fleece of California" (Gold and the argonauts!) which title reminds me of Vachel Lindsay's "The Golden Whales of California," though no two poems could be more different. The book is published by the Countryman Press at Weston, Vermont, in a limited signed edition at $3.50. Vrest Orton has done the printing. "The Complete Rhyming Dictionary" is edited by *Clement Wood* and published by Halcyon House, Reynal & Hitchcock, Blue Ribbon Books, Inc., at $1.89. "The Best Loved Poems of the American People" is selected by *Hazel Felleman* and published by the Garden City Publishing Company, Inc., at $1.69.



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Some Limited Issues

GEORGE BORROW: Lavengro. Introduction by Hugh Walpole. Illustrated by Barnett Freedman. New York: The Limited Editions Club. 1936.

THOREAU: Walden. Introduction by H. S. Canby. Illustrated by Edward Steichen. The same.

E. E. HALE: The Man Without a Country. Introduction by Carl Van Doren. Illustrated by E. A. Wilson. The same.

IN this group of three issues of the Limited Editions Club's books, there are two classics of literature, and one dubious classic of sentimentality. To dispose of the last, first. Hale's little story, once, at least, known to everybody, was a piece of polemical literature written during the heat of the Civil War. As a story it is preposterous, as polemics it neatly balances Dr. Johnson's much shorter story: "Patriotism is the last refuge of a scoundrel." This is a thin book, the pictures being stencilled after Mr. Wilson's drawings in color. The leather binding—well, the effort to make a *book* out of this short story is a bit too evident throughout.

But when we come to the other two titles, we find something to be kind to. Borrow and Thoreau: here are two names to conjure with, and the Curwen Press and the Merrymount Press, Freedman and Steichen, have conjured two good books. "Lavengro" is in two small octavo volumes, printed in a sharp, somewhat mannered, but very agreeable roman type, on pleasant paper, with conventional running heads and all the gadgets of a well-made book. The books are easily handled and easily read. Mr. Freedman's pictures—the lithographs in color—are also a bit too mannered to be good illustrations for the text, but they are pleasant in color and when he tries to tell a story he succeeds. The black-and-white pictures do not seem to me to add much to the book. The binding is a simple cloth one, and altogether the volumes are fit to put on the shelf of books reserved for reading.

"Walden" is a better printed book than the foregoing, even. There is a typographic finality about it characteristic of the best Merrymount printing, though its quarto shape is not the handiest form for reading. There is a neat economy of design about it which would have satisfied the pencil-maker, though I suspect he would have scorned the photographic illustrations as substitutes for first-hand observation. Yet nothing could have been better for the purpose of illustration. What could one do with "Walden"? If "Walden" is a "study of values realized in a Utopian life," as Mr. Canby says, only a transcendental imagination could illustrate it in picture: hence Mr. Steichen's superb photographs of Walden Pond (which is still much as it was in Thoreau's day) and its fauna and flora, is a compromise too good to be called such. I doubt if a more satisfactory edition of "Walden" has appeared.

Curbing the Press

GOVERNMENT AND THE PRESS 1695-1763. By Laurence Hanson. London: Oxford Books on Bibliography. 1936.

If the story of the Imp and the Bottle needed a European *locale* it could be furnished by Mainz on the Rhine. John Gutenberg and his lead types started an innovation which has plagued Authority ever since. Church and State, both beneficiaries of printing, have vainly tried to curb the free use of the art, and while they have succeeded for the moment (even to burning the printer as well as his books) they have always failed in the long run. Mr. Hanson's book, while it covers a very short period of sixty-eight years in one country, reveals the futility of suppression of ideas in the England of the eighteenth century. The melancholy aspect of history stands out in the endeavor of the English Parliament, which had fought long and nobly for its own rights, to retain its own privileges in the matter of reports of proceedings. More ominous, the rise of Government publications—the *London Gazette*, Defoe's *Review*, Swift's *Examiner*, and Fielding's *Jacobites Journal*—is recorded: they were not journals of information so much as propaganda sheets. The book is an original contribution of great value, as it is based on sources hitherto unpublished. It appears in the splendid format of the Oxford Bibliographical Series, with a frontispiece and an index.

Miscellaneous

WALPOLEANA. Mr. Lewis's continuation of Horace Walpole's "Miscellaneous Antiquities" is enriched by a charming printing of an unpublished note by Walpole on "The Duchess of Portland's Museum," now issued for members of the Grolier Club and for Mr. Lewis's friends.

DR. FRANKLIN AND MR. JAY. A hitherto unpublished MS. of John J. Jay, written in Paris in 1783-84, has been published in limited edition by the Three Monks Press, New Haven. The format is attractive in grey paper and paper binding.

INJUNS! "Wah-to-yah and the Taos Trail" is a further contribution by the Grabhorn Press to the Rare Americana Series. The printing is, as always, good, though the title-page is not so good. There are woodcuts printed in color, a map, and an introduction by Carl I. Wheat.

MORE ABOUT BR. George Hornby has issued from The Domesday Press, Providence, R. I., a carefully printed edition of an article which Paul Bennett wrote for the *Linotype News* in 1934. Bennett is an excellent reporter, and this edition of his interview with Rogers will be prized for its good and permanent form.

WIRE *or 'phone!*

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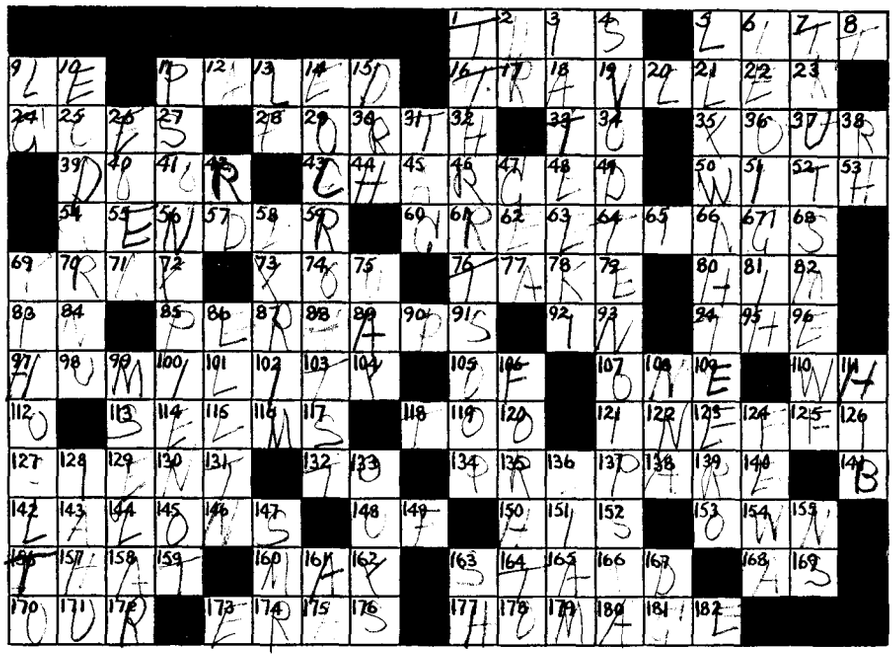
Double-Crostics: No. 143

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY



DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-six words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's International Dictionary.

☞ **In Double-Crostic No. 143, the first two sentences in the completed diagram (including spaces from 1 to 84) are to be read in quotation marks.**

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 18 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

I. Flattened; made level.

II. Resemblance due to common ancestry.

III. Any animal whose legs are used as oars.

IV. Gilbert and Sullivan Opera.

V. American novelist (1881—).

VI. Rises to a great height.

VII. A State of the U. S.

VIII. Satiric paper by George William Curtis.

IX. Progress.

X. Heroine of one of the Idylls (Tennyson).

XI. Almost indispensable (comp.).

XII. Condition of living on only one kind of food.

XIII. On the extreme external part.

XIV. Rustum's horse (Matthew Arnold).

XV. Subject of Pulitzer prize biography by D. S. Freeman.

XVI. Epoch.

XVII. Emperor of Japan (1912-1926).

XVIII. Apostle of the Indies (1506-1552).

XIX. A President of the U. S.

XX. Consequences.

XXI. State of bending with difficulty.

XXII. Character in the "Beggar Maid" (Tennyson).

XXIII. Goddess of infatuation (Gr.).

XXIV. 16th century collars.

XXV. Composer of "Lucia di Lammermoor."

XXVI. To worry; fret (Colloq.).

WORDS

C
127 41 82 69 21 168 84 45 94 58
H O R O L H Y L V
95 74 174 170 13 88 72 142 35
R E M I P E D
38 96 160 151 85 79 49
N
83 119 101 71 166 64 157 22
S T R I P L I N G
152 52 46 92 141 5 128 155 60
T O W E R S
118 29 154 129 135 176
S
148 23 62 181 40 130
P O E T I P E A R
137 105 159 100 11 177 18 61
H
97 123 180 57 50 12 104
E T T A R E
109 156 33 89 42 140
R I C H A R D
172 121 24 32 76 44 138 146 39
M O N O P H A G Y
116 34 93 112 90 53 165 67 73
O
120 75 7 20 87 179 25 68 103
R U S K I N
30 171 78 91 150
L E
9 48 136
A
115 17 143
Y O S H I H I T O
162 36 27 111 6 80 126 164 107
E A V I E D
173 77 19 51 26 15
M O M U S
99 145 122 59 178 63
A F T E R I N G S
161 106 132 86 70 81 66 47 4
S T I F F N E S S
169 1 65 28 125 56 14 113 147
C A E T U A
43 133 134 2 55 16 37 175
A T E
158 8 114
S
139 98 124 149 163
D O N I Z E T T I
167 153 108 102 144 10 131 31 3
S
117 54 182 110

The New Books

(Continued from page 19)

America will follow their example. As literary embroidery her book possesses unusual merit, and with Mme. St. Hélier's "Bois Mort" and the works of Robert Francis may be said to constitute a new school of French fiction, seeking to apply some of Mme. de Ségur's technique to grown-up subjects. Certainly it is not a novel for general public consumption, but a throwback to the Ancien Régime, lathered with charm, and sometimes definitely boring.

T. P., Jr.

Juvenile

THE KEYS TO THE CITY. By Lavinia Davis. Scribner's. 1936. $2.

Frankie Stanton, compelled through depletion of the family budget, to spend a summer in New York, through the aid of Betty (a little German girl from Munich) shows her cousin from Jamaica, Forsythe Reynolds, various parts of New York City. They visit the German section in Yorkville, the Harlem Market, the U. S. Volunteer Life Saving Station, take a sick kitten to the S. P. C. A., go boating in Central Park, visit an ex-tugboat in the Harlem River, and so on. The end-papers of the book, which are delightful maps, will give you an idea of its contents. There are discovery of a plot and adventure underground in the matter of Peter Carroll's antique shop. The story gives one an idea of the many fascinating aspects of New York that the average person misses. A good book for youngsters who wish to know more of their own city.

Brief Mention

This year's collection of "O. Henry Memorial Award Prize Stories of 1936" edited by Harry Hansen (Doubleday, Doran, $2.50) contains stories by James Gould Cozzens, William March, Walter D. Edmonds, William Faulkner, and others, nineteen in all. Mr. Cozzens won the first prize this year, Sally Benson the second. * * * Carl Van Doren has edited "The Borzoi Reader" (Knopf, $3.50), an omnibus of Borzoi books, essays and poetry, including Willa Cather's "My Mortal Enemy," Elinor Wylie's "The Venetian Glass Nephew," Thomas Mann's "Death in Venice," and contributions by Clarence Day, Joseph Hergesheimer, George Jean Nathan, H. L. Mencken, Max Beerbohm, and many others. It runs over a thousand pages. * * * Another omnibus is "The Theatre Guild Anthology" (Random House, $3.50), containing the complete texts of fourteen Theatre Guild productions, from "John Ferguson" to "Rain from Heaven," and including "Saint Joan" and "Strange Interlude." * * * A disappointing little collection is "365 Days," edited by Kay Boyle, Laurence Vail, and Nina Conarain (Harcourt, Brace, $3). This book consists of short short stories, one for each day of the year 1934, by over a hundred writers. Kay Boyle did most of the work and, although there are a few good pieces here and there, the general effect is coterie art at its worst.

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PERSONALS

ADVERTISEMENTS will be accepted in this column for things wanted or unwanted; personal services to let or required; literary or publishing offers not easily classified elsewhere; miscellaneous items appealing to a select and intelligent clientèle; exchange and barter of literary property or literary services; jobs wanted, houses or camps for rent, tutoring, travelling companions, ideas for sale; communications of a decorous nature; expressions of opinion (limited to fifty lines). All advertisements must be consonant with the purposes and character of The Saturday Review. Rates: 7 cents per word, including signature. Count two additional words for Box and Number. Payment in full must be received ten days in advance of publication. Address Personal Dept., Saturday Review, 25 West 45th Street, New York City.

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MY DAY AND YOUR DAY—FRIDAY. Don't miss the Christmas Carnival and Auction of the New York Newspaper Guild, December 18th, from 10 P.M. to 1 A.M. at the Barbizon-Plaza. Among items at auction are: holograph copy of Mrs. Roosevelt's "My Day," first and autographed editions of Morley, Faulkner, Hemingway, Thomas Wolfe, etc., and original drawings by famous artists. And in person Heywood Broun, Gloria M. Vanderbilt, Jimmy Durante and Dwight Fiske.

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VILLAGER, thirty, would hear from congenial New Yorkers. Box 723-B.

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

THE Supreme Court Decision upholding the fair trade practice laws of Illinois and California gives the book trade in New York reason to hope that the Feld-Crawford Act will be revalidated. The Feld-Crawford Act, by which publishers and booksellers could sign contracts preventing competing booksellers or department stores from cutting prices, was declared unconstitutional last January by the New York Court of Appeals, as it applied to the case of Doubleday, Doran *vs.* R. H. Macy & Co. (See *Saturday Review*, Nov. 2 and 9, 1935, and January 25, 1936.) Doubleday, Doran now announce that they will make a request for a rehearing before the Court of Appeals at Albany. "It is thought to be unbelievable," says the Doubleday announcement, "that the Court of Appeals of the State of New York will not make available to the merchants and manufacturers of New York State such fair trade and merchandising advantages which the United States Supreme Court has sanctioned for all the rest of the United States." The Feld-Crawford Act is identical with the Illinois and California Fair Trade Acts. The Court of Appeals will meet January 4.

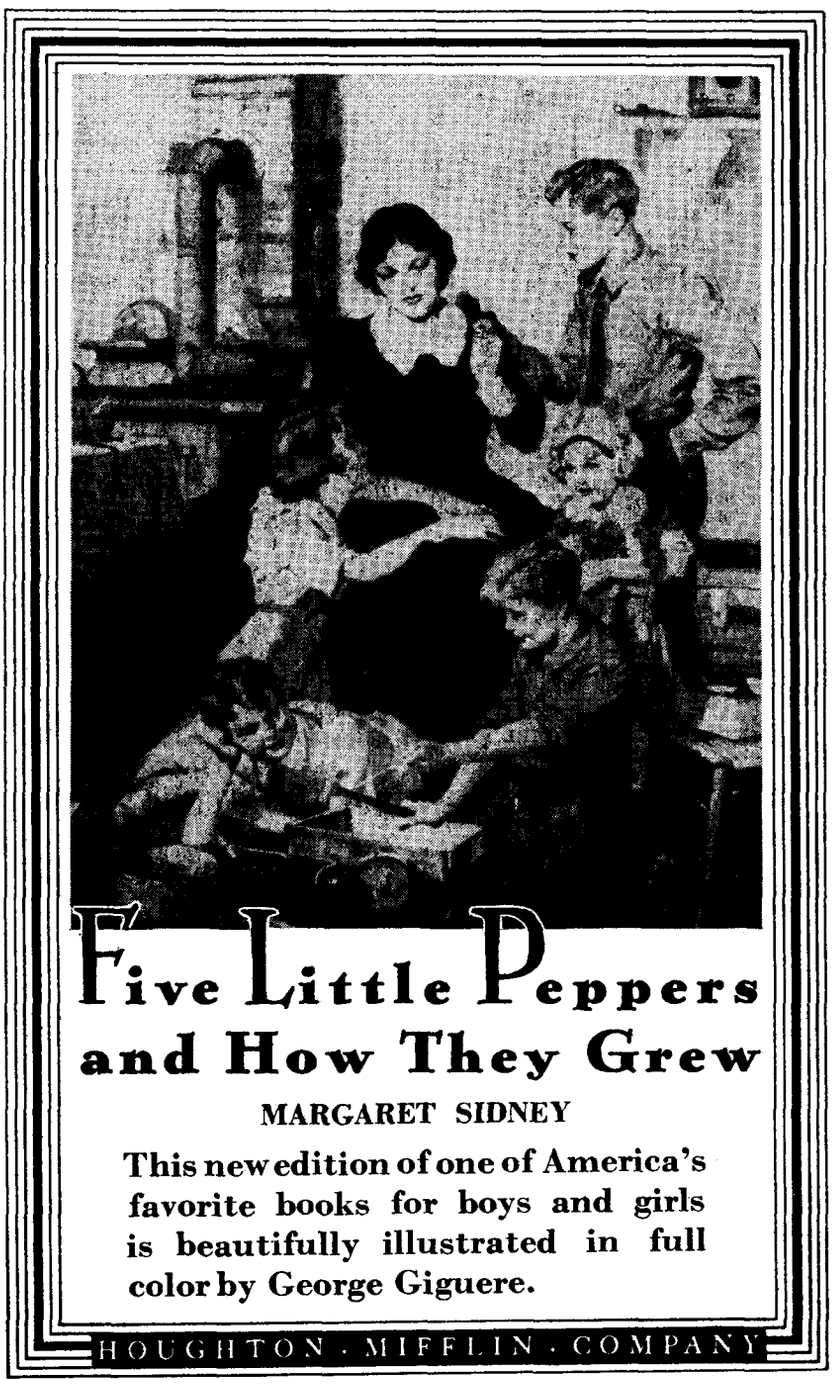
☞Edmund Pearson says Old Q. was wrong (Oct. 10) in attributing to him a 1920 item in the column *Writers and Books* in the Boston *Transcript*. Mr. Pearson's column, in those days, was called we believe, *The Librarian*. ☞*Writers and Books* was then, and is still, by Edwin Edgett, whom Mr. Pearson calls the "best literary editor anywhere and best editor to work for." ☞Norman Alexander Hall, bookseller in Newton Centre, Mass., has compiled an alluring list of Three Deckers. There was something about the old three-volume novel that operated as perfect anodyne. Think for instance of the Baroness Tautphoeus, whose name always fascinated us. Hall offers her *The Initials*, 3 vols., 1850, at $10.

☞A hand to Herman C. Beaty of Macmillan for a swell ad on *Gone With the Wind* in the *Saturday Evening Post* last week. We understand that the full color page cost $11,800; that a prominent agency was invited to coöperate in making up the ad, but wanted a month to do it in; that Mr. Beaty proceeded to do it himself, since only 5 days were available. A good job, too.

☞Highly recommended to clients in the Trade is *Swinnerton: an Autobiography*, which gives a lot of information on publishing in England. One good anecdote, among many others, concerns the publication of Aldous Huxley's first book of short stories, *Limbo*.

> It now seems very amusing to think that this book was very nearly not published by Chatto & Windus at all. Mr. Spalding, delighted that we should be associated with the grandson of his old idol, made it his business to read through a set of the *Limbo* proofs. And the first thing I knew about this was that Charles Prentice, a young partner in the firm, came to me in terrible excitement, to say that Mr. Spalding refused absolutely to publish anything so appallingly gross, blasphemous, and horrible. . . .
>
> I always think of the sequel as a rather good performance on my part; for Mr. Spalding came into the room breathing heavily, rather red in the face, and looking shockingly determined. . . . Gradually, by tact, by merriment, by slight distraction, and in other ways, I persuaded him that but for three points—one should always, in such circumstances, gracefully yield something—the book was free of all offence. I undertook to write Huxley, who readily agreed to make the three small revisions. The book was published. All Huxley's other books have been published by the same firm.

☞Hugh Eayrs, of Canadian Macmillan, says the Book Fair idea reached Toronto two years before it got to New York. He wrote us not long ago, when the Canuck Book Fair was at its height: "We have them standing six and seven deep at the lectures, in one of the largest auditoria in the city. We are averaging 3000 a day, which, pro rata, our population to yours, is bloody marvellous." Fine work, Hughie: Toronto always was a first-rate book town. ☞We have been pleased to see the friendly reviews accorded *As I Remember*, the autobiography of that notable artist Arnold Genthe. Dr. Genthe these many years has moved with dignity and charm through a helter-skelter civilization which was foreign to his early training. ☞Next year (1937) will be the 300th anniversary of Ben Jonson's death. May we be the first to drink Herrick's "immensive cup" for the occasion; yes, Parson Herrick who started the modern phrase with his, "Ah, Ben, *say when*."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